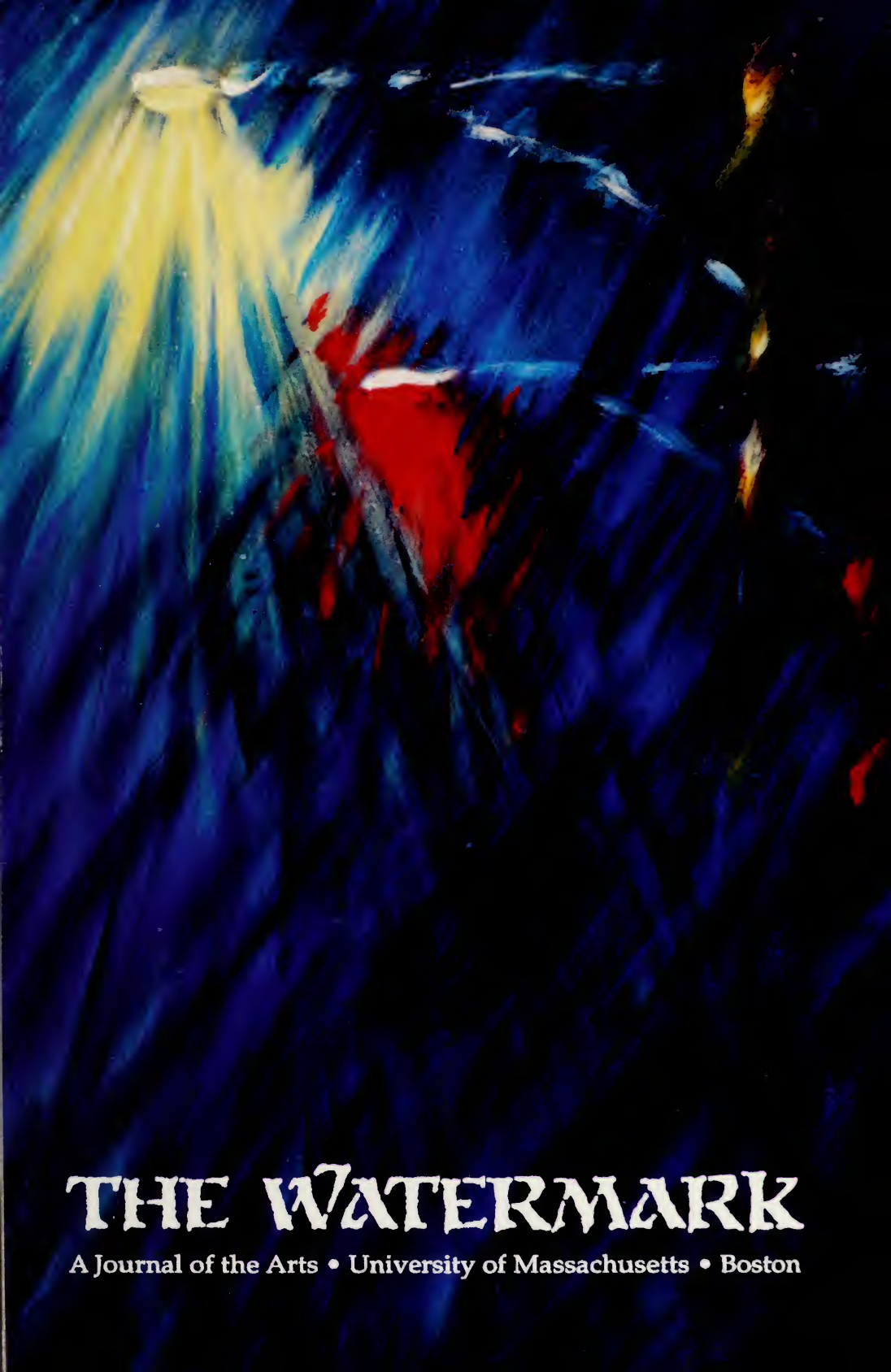


THE WATERMARK

A Journal of the Arts • University of Massachusetts • Boston

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2015

https://archive.org/details/watermarkvolume808univ

THE WATERMARK

A Journal of the Arts • University of Massachusetts • Boston

2000-2001

When power leads man toward arrogance, poetry reminds him of his limitations. When power narrows the areas of man's concern, poetry reminds him of the richness and diversity of his existence. When power corrupts, poetry cleanses.

John F. Kennedy

Front Cover: "Street Lights"
Acrylic on Canvas
Josephine Bottari

Back Cover: "Celebration Of The Goddess Within"
Acrylic on Canvas
Cristin Chmielinski

Editor
Kendra A. FitzGerald

Assistant Editor
Matthew Breton

Gallery Coordinator
Samantha Palmer

Art Editor
Philip Nerboso

Poetry Editor
Thomas Olivieri

Prose/Drama Editor
Morgan Turano

Art Jurors
Samantha Palmer
Josephine Bottari
Elizabeth Ward
Maya Grigorovich-Barsky

Poetry Readers
John Rhilinger
John Black
Adam Garnett
Michele Lisio

Prose/Drama Readers
James Dow
Carmella Kearsley
Jonus Johansen
Jason Campos

Editor's Note

The Watermark is a student run organization which has survived at UMass Boston under many names and forms since 1979. The purpose of *The Watermark* is to showcase literary and artistic work by the students who represent UMass Boston. *The Watermark* is funded by the Student Senate and is printed annually to be distributed free of charge to the UMass Boston community. Selections included in this edition were chosen anonymously by the editorial staff (including readers and jurors) which is composed of UMass Boston students from different majors and diverse backgrounds.

Acknowledgments

The Watermark is grateful for the support of the UMass Boston Student Senate. Special thanks to Donna Neal and the Student Life faculty, to Lloyd Schwartz and the Creative Writing Program faculty, to the English and Art departments, to the staff of *The Watermark*, and to all of the students who submitted their work to *The Watermark* this year.

Join *The Watermark* Staff

Volunteer work with *The Watermark* allows students the opportunity to understand the production planning involved in publishing a literarature and arts journal. *The Watermark* is seeking individuals for a variety of positions for the 2001-02 edition. Contact Matthew Breton in *The Watermark* office at (617)287-7960 if you are interested.

The Lillian Lorraine Jones Memorial Prize

2000-2001

Lillian Lorraine Jones was a freshman student at UMass Boston when she died. She was an older student who had discovered her love of writing in Freshman English, and hoped to pursue it in creative writing courses. When she died, her mother chose to honor that wish by giving a gift to the Creative Writing Program. The Lillian Lorraine Jones Memorial Prize is funded by that gift and is given by *The Watermark* to a student who demonstrates an outstanding ability in prose or fiction writing. The editors of *The Watermark* are pleased to announce that the award for The Lillian Lorraine Jones Memorial Prize goes to:

David A. Fernandez
for his short story
What if we Refuse to Follow the Rules of Fashion?

Congratulations from the editors of *The Watermark* and the Creative Writing Program

Honorable Mention
Luana Giesta
Maria L. Cardozo

— Poetry —

105 | *Ode*
John Black

32 | *Refuge, 1938*
Alice Carter

12 | *The Exhibit*
Siri Colom

73 | *Eurydice's Song*
96 | *Pomegranate*
Kate DuToit

17 | *A Call To You*
Erik Foley

86 | *Leviathan*
Kevin McNulty

60 | *Family Tree*
Danny Slaton

— Non-Fiction —

8 | *The Charles River: Finally Coming Home*
Maria L. Cardozo

74 | *Marvi: The Legend of the Indus Valley*
Wazen

— Drama —

88 | *The Story of the Man who Turned into a Dog*
Luana Giesta

— Fiction —

24 *Double Life*
49 *Punch Drunk*
Nathaniel Beyer

99 *What if we Refuse to Follow the Rules of Fashion?*
David A. Fernandez

61 *Waiting*
Steven Hornsby

97 *Lost*
Mary Elizabeth Lennon

81 *Dearest Dad*
Dalcione Reis

53 *Victims not Dumped in the River*
Danny Slaton

— Art —

95 "Philip & Sachi"
13 "Suthi"
14 "Woman"
Masami Ataka

37 "Self-Portrait"
Michelle Babbit

47 "Street Lights"
Josephine Bottari

36 "Angry Little Girl, No Arms"
34 "Horse, Stage 2"
35 "Horse, Stage 3"
Heather Burke

70 "Sky 11"
Mark Capraro

77 "Untitled"
Susan Castagliola

72 "Forgetting. . ."
Lelia Chilarescu

48 "Celebration Of The Goddess Within"
41 "Innocence Lost"
40 "Rebirth"
Cristin Chmielinski

58 "Believe"
Zhixin Fang

108 "When In Rome. . ."
109 "When In Rome. . ."
Maya Grigorovich-Barsky

106 "Woman Under The Influence #4"
107 "Woman Under The Influence #10"
David Hartman

23 "Portrait Of A Lady"
59 "Self-Portrait"
22 "Self-Portrait With Parents"
Justin Hughes

56 "Self-Portrait"
57 "Waiting For Class"
Herbert Kirshnit

66 "Legs"
67 "The Spaceship"
55 "Tornado Tree"
Alison Lindburg

42 "Black Widow Spider"
43 "Roller Coaster"
Judith Listernick

83 "Good Morning"
85 "Little Sister"
84 "The Perfect Woman"
Walter Medina

39 "Dancer"
80 "Derreire"
38 "Games"
Suthi L. Picotte-Harper

78 "Self-Portrait #121"
79 "Self-Portrait #569"
Eilene Recupero

33 "Scottie"
Kathryn Soderstrom

68 "Living Together"
69 "Memories"
Abba A. Tahas

65 "The Middle Passage and Our Redemption Song"
71 "Phases, #2"
Kerry-Ann Thomas

15 "Untitled"
16 "Untitled"
94 "Untitled"
Akiko Toyonaga

44 "Boston 3 Piece"
45 "Intersection At Mass Art"
46 "Negotiated Space"
Nick Zaremba

20 "Untitled"
21 "Untitled"
Andrey Zimin

Maria L. Cardozo

The Charles River: Finally Coming Home

I suddenly realized just the other day, that my entire life has been framed by and in a very real sense defined by, the parameters of the meandering Charles River and, by extension, the entire panorama of the Boston skyline. Although I have traveled far and wide to various parts of the world over the course of my lifetime, it is this river, this skyline that represents all that I value and cherish—the essence of all the forces that have shaped the person that I am today and even more importantly symbolizes the most powerful memories from the past that keep me centered and on course amidst the chaos. This spectacular view is now available to me 24 hours a day in my new apartment and this has made all the difference. My life's journey began on the banks of the Charles River when I was born at Mount Auburn Hospital at the beginning of World War II. Five years later my sister, Carol, was also born there.

Directly over the hill from Mount Auburn is the Shady Hill School where, for better or worse, I spent my formative childhood years from ages three to fifteen. I was "hand-picked" by the founder, Katherine Taylor to integrate that school—a "pioneer" very much against my will and the impact of this "experiment" has had an incalculable effect on my entire life, which continues to reverberate to this day.

Cambridge Cemetery lies directly behind Shady Hill on the banks of the Charles River and as children, we all spent many happy hours there on long nature walks, bird watching and bike riding. My father even taught me how to drive a car along those winding paths. Now, however, this is the final resting place of both of my parents (as well as my great-grandmother Johnson), and the place, too, where I will finally be laid to rest.

Harvard University was of course a focal point of many of my happiest memories. Who could escape its influence growing up in Cambridge? Not only was my father a Harvard graduate—something (much to his credit)—he always down-played in favor of his Tufts University-Fletcher School Association— but virtually all of my friends at Shady Hill had a "Harvard connection" and the entire campus—the Yard, Harvard Square, etc., was my playground. My coming of teenage years were a blur of parties, formal dances, plays, commencements—all on the campus. My father and I *never* missed a Harvard-Yale game—The Game—for many years "through rain, sleet and snow," until, alas I finally

became "too grown up" to go to The Game with Daddy, but memories of that ancient and hallowed "rite" echo through my soul every fall.

Holiday family picnics were often held on the banks of the Charles. My mother, being overly cautious and a tad overprotective, was leery of dangerous traffic and congestion so she never wanted us to stray far from home on major summer holidays. She would effortlessly prepare this moveable feast of fried chicken, the world's greatest potato salad, and the awesome "mystery" punch, and we would all pile into the car with enough picnic paraphernalia to camp out for months, and drive ten minutes away to the banks of the Charles River for our holiday extravaganza! Also, when Joan Baez was gracious enough to join us for what turned out to be our very last (and the most memorable) of our family fourth of July cookouts at Kirkland Road in 1959, where my sister and I tracked her down by the River, singing and holding forth playing her guitar of course.

When the lights go on at Fenway Park, the memories come flooding back—sounds, sights and tastes! Nothing in this whole world tastes as good as a couple of Fenway Franks on a balmy summer night watching the perpetual "Boys of Summer" live out my fantasy (still very much alive in me to this day!) of becoming the very first female to play for the Red Sox and hit a Grand Slam—bottom of the ninth, three balls, two strikes—over the "Green Monster"—ending the "Curse of the Bambino," and capturing the World Series pennant for the hometown team.

These were the glory days of my youth when my father would take us to the games, and I can still hear the roar of the crowd echoing through hot summer days.

Several blocks away stands the venerable (ancient and honorable!) dinosaur known as Boston Garden, which holds similar memories that continue through adulthood. We had always been avid hockey fans, but "Boston Bruins Fever" reached its peak in the late sixties with the advent of that most golden of all the golden boys—"Number Four"—the incomparable, Bobby Orr, the most elegant skater ever to grace the ice and for a few magical years, seemingly forever suspended in time. Our lives literally revolved around the "Big Bad Bruins" and their relentless quest for the Holy Grail—Lord Stanley's Cup! The pinnacle was reached in that one climactic moment on the day before my birthday in May 1970. We had actually been offered 1,000 dollars *each* for our two tickets by some Boston bigwig, but my father said "no way!" After 20 years of frustration, no way were we going to be denied our "Championship Season!" I bought a new dress and my father sneaked in a bottle of champagne in a brown paper bag and when that transcendent moment finally came, courtesy of Bobby Orr, there was a collective explosion of joy such as I have never experienced before or since! A natural high that rocked the rafters of that musty old place and lifted the spirits of the

entire city of Boston for an entire week. I treasure these memories forever. . .

Boston University—"Virtue, Learning and Piety" being its rather pretentious motto, stands as another milestone. This was my mother's alma mater and after she died, I transferred from Sarah Lawrence in Bronxville, New York, and actually graduated from B.U. exactly thirty years later, almost to the very day, in June of 1963. As I proudly held my diploma high in the sweltering 95 degree heat, I sent a silent prayer of gratitude upwards and said, "I did it, Mummy. I finally did it, just as you always knew I could." That was truly one of the happiest days of my entire life.

The golden dome of the State House shines like a beacon through the darkness. My grandfather worked there his entire life, as did my mother (until she had me), and I too worked there as an intern in the summer of 1957—my very first job in the *real* world.

And in the graceful shadow of the Golden Dome lies Joy Street on Beacon Hill, where my grandfather and my great aunt Addie grew up as "Colored Yankees"—one of Boston's first black families. In fact, directly in front of the entrance to the State House stands a monument erected as a tribute to the "Brave Black Regiment" of the Civil War in which my ancestor, Robert Johnson, honorably served.

Although it is impossible to see from my window, the State House always reminds me of the Public Gardens and the "Swan Boats," a childhood treasure which stems from the fact that "Make Way for Ducklings" was my most cherished book, which I learned to "read" when I was only three years old!

What is now called "Downtown Crossing" yields yet another set of precious memories; my very first trips to the movies—Abbot and Costello matinees with Granny; followed, of course, by the "World's Most Amazing Hot Fudge Sundaes" at the epitome of "Old Boston"—Bailey's—with mountains of fudge sauce and freshly whipped cream cascading down and overflowing onto the huge silver trays that were strategically placed underneath each individual bowl to rescue each and every heavenly morsel. Life just did not get any better than this! Back to school shopping trips every fall with my mother and Carol in tow—patent leather shoes, saddle oxfords, white gloves, dinner at the Parker House served up to perfection by the most elegant and distinguished black waiters who always made Carol and myself feel as if we were the "creme de la creme." Family trips to the museum, theater, ballet and opera which opened up a whole new wondrous world to me—the world of the imagination with all of its limitless possibilities—a magical world where there are no boundaries and I can soar. And it is this quality—this "gift" from my parents, above all others that has enabled me to endure.

When I gaze out of my window at the panoramic view of the entire Boston skyline, I am comforted and strengthened by the fact that there has indeed been a certain continuity to my life after all; that my life has not been a series of senseless and random tragic events and losses—total chaos—but rather, underneath it all, a seamless flow and now I realize that by moving into this new apartment something quite unexpected and truly amazing has occurred. I have come full circle. I have finally come *home*.

And I think of all those important people in my life, now passed forever from this earth, who loved me, guided me and believed in me, and those precious memories—each one of them a living legacy to me, freeze-framed for all eternity in my heart, mind, and soul and continuing to nourish and sustain me in a never-ending flow.

And I also think of how happy we all were then, how magical it all was, how truly blessed I was to have had such an incredible life's journey and finally, in the eloquent and immortal words of one of my favorite movies from childhood, I too express my wonder and gratitude by saying, "How Green Was My Valley. . ."

Maria L. Cardozo

Siri Colom

The Exhibit

In the museum of natural history
a man crouches
behind tempered glass.
Muscles define a stocky
disproportionate body.
The eyes look off to the side
at a faded painted scene.
His long, curly hair hangs wildly;
his dusty beard is stuck to his face
and visible in this careless
tumbleweed are peach lips.
Under his windowed box
a plaque reads
"The Neanderthal, an extinct species,
inhabited the earth during the late
Pleistocene Age. We know. . ."

In the room behind a closed
door for Employees Only,
a man sits on a metal chair
looking through a plastic microscope.
He furiously writes notes about all
that he sees—a bone—
constructing the history of a man
who lived millions of years ago.
He knows if he was a fighter or peaceful,
he knows what colors to paint the box,
he knows what clothes this bone wore,
and he is pleased.

Outside in the rain, a million people
move like cells under his microscope,
and around the world
others discuss how murdering
despots in such and such a country
could commit horrible crimes.
But they know
nothing for sure.

"Suthi"
B&W Photography
Masami Ataka

"Woman"
B&W Photography
Masami Ataka

"Untitled"
B&W Photography
Akiko Toyanaga

"Untitled"
B&W Photography
Akiko Toyanaga

Erik Foley

A Call To You

I never walked the earth a discipline
For Christ I never knew, and thankful
Am I, for perfection was never my profession.
And God knows I've fallen times,
For I am human,
And have slipped when it rained,
And have picked myself up and adapted my step,
Have learned from those who fell before me
Am learning now as I step to you. . .

As I have stepped to others in the past
Each time walking on a sheet of glass,
And have found and have failed, even
turned and walked away.
Have myself been part of the problem
since I could not devise at the time its resolve.

Yet here I stand, a man, unsolved,
resolved to try.
And can stand as long as any man
left or right, right or wrong.
Men who know ignorance and men who don't,
Men who know defiance and men who know reliance
and men who live only to die.

I am no greater. . .

Than any hater of my sisters or brothers as he too
is of my blood and of my dirt and of my sun,
is our weakest link or is our strength. . .
Is not my decision to make.

I am resolute as the ground I'm on
This earth that we both tread upon,
And have seen the long miles of green grassland
Have gripped the beggar's scabbed hand.
Relished deep, quiet miles of high country woods,

Have seen the chessboard neighborhoods.
Passed the gray street ghetto and the hollow shells,
By the pale plantation and the city swells.
Seen clouds gather over the garden vacant—
Have suffered the consequence
yet could not be there to prevent it.
Have myself been the victim of derision and glare,
Have swallowed the pointed end of a hundred stares.
And could prove what I say is true
if you and I had more time,

But we haven't.

I can't see the world as it goes through your eyes.
I'm here confined behind my own.
I don't know how you hear,
but I'll let you in on a secret I know—
Time as it goes moves too fast for the eye
And truth gets fragmented passing by.
Trust only the rhythm and confusion inside,
Inhale, ingest, caress, to decide.

I'm fumbling to articulate these thoughts as they come south
as truest thought is lost mind to mouth
And purest Song cannot be said
for truest music changes heart to head.

Are you listening out there?
Can you hear my hopeful call?
Or is my screaming being silenced
by this muted colorless wall?

Would I understand we're different?
Will you recognize we're the same?
Or will you pass me with your eyes cast down
holding tight your bitter pain?
These eyes cast up in vain. . .
This hope burned up in flame.

I am not colorblind.
I am not free of sin.
I have unwittingly partaken of the fruit of my own skin.
I am in exile just as you,
Unholy—suffering—here undone
Shivering in the eastern wind
my skin burning in the sun.

I call to you of water, you of fire, you of sand,
Are you out there wandering, seeking me?

I offer you my hand. . .

Should I wait for you to come around?
I will embrace you as you near,
And will hold you close as I hold myself
If you can fight your fear
        to sit awhile beside the welcome of my ear.

I will hear you spin angelic verse in language redefined,
Our culture, one for Humanity from that day forth will shine:

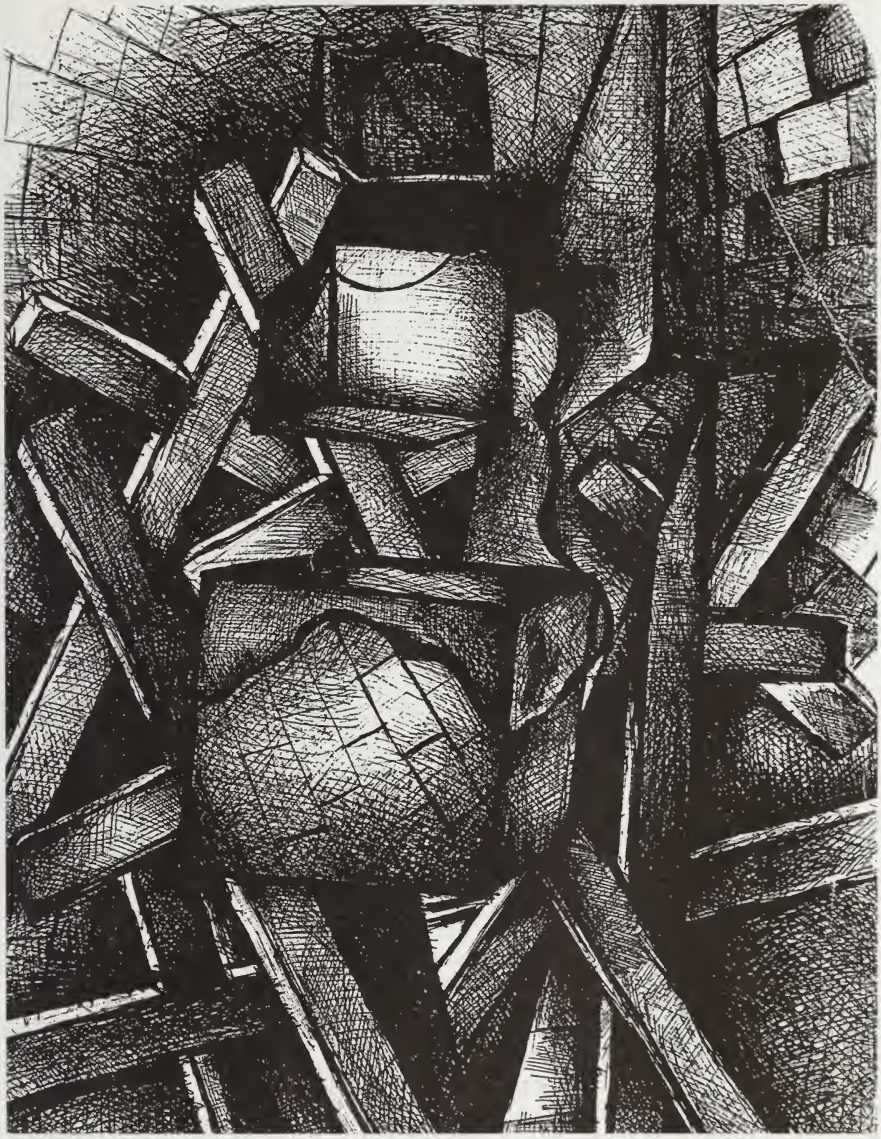
Of we, the livers of life, the learners of the lessons,
Lovers of flesh and dirt and sky,
Embracers of all hues cross the earth
        plentiful as the inner soul—
as peace of
        body, peace of mind. . .

Of aspiration for the cosmos and the level of the ground,
Of the indulger of compassion,
Of the hopers for Heaven,
Of empathy for Earth,
For the stricken, for the old,
For those that wake weeping, those that sleep and dream. . .
Ever the children,
Ever the seekers,
Ever the light of the world—
Ever gazing ever dancing ever touching
        ever ours. . .

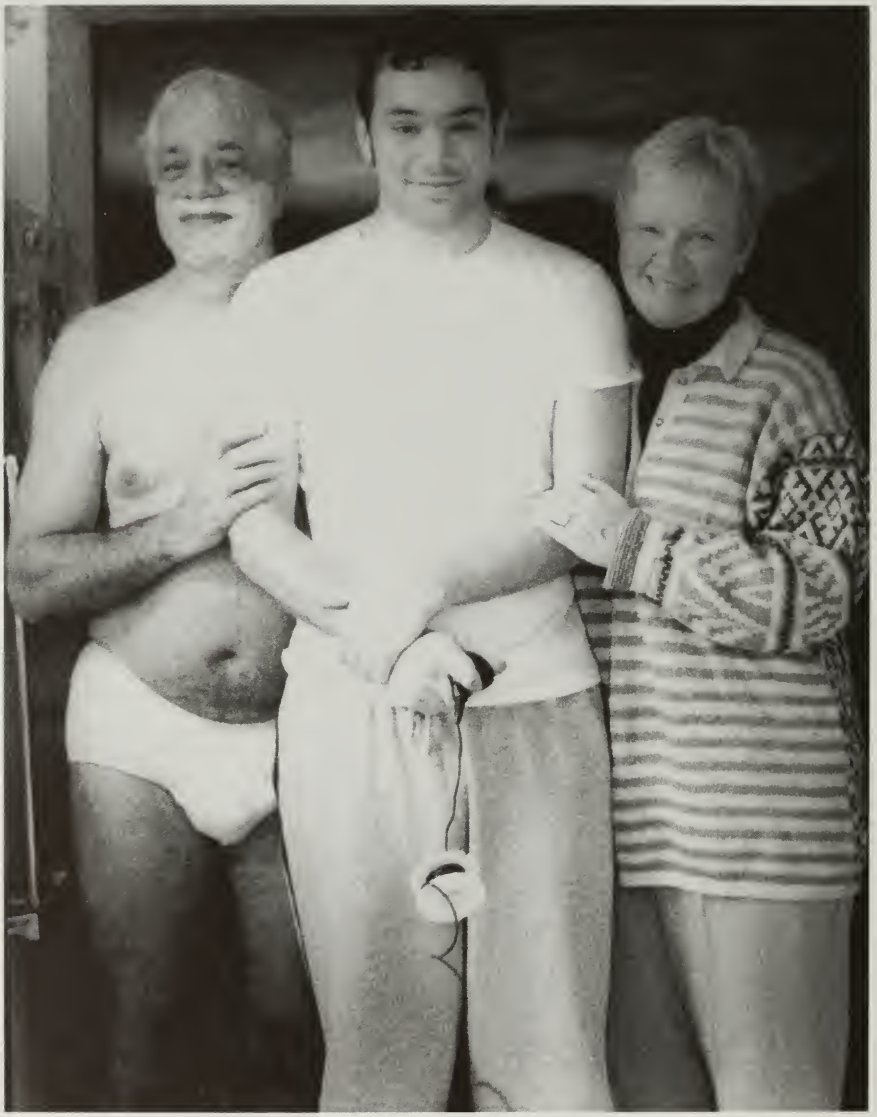
But when my sister?
. . .when my brother?
. . .when. . .*my sister, my brother?*

Erik Foley

"Untitled"
Pen and Ink
Andrey Zimin



"Untitled"
Pen and Ink
Andrey Zimin



"Self-Portrait With Parents"
B&W Photography
Justin Hughes

"Portrait Of A Lady"
B&W Photography
Justin Hughes

Nathaniel Beyer

Double Life

The sun was starting to burn off some of the morning's gloom. He sat in the car, his hand still resting on the key ring dangling from the ignition. After a few moments, he scanned the road behind him using both side mirrors and the rear-view. Nothing stirred. He reached under his seat and removed two small plastic bags. From one bag he extracted a small metal pipe and filled it with lime-green marijuana from the other bag. The deep, heavy incense of the marijuana filled the car and made a lump in his gut, almost like excitement.

After a few hits, he worried that the car might smell of marijuana. He cracked the window slightly. The marijuana and its accessories he left on the seat next to him, covering it with a brown plaid shirt he removed from a blue gym bag on the floor of the car. From the back seat he pulled a thick novel with a nearly unpronounceable name. The novel was a long religious allegory, the central theme of which seemed to be you-don't-know-what-you-have-until-you-lose-it, with the interrelated sub-theme of people-can-stare-salvation-right-in-the-face-and-kill-it-dead-because-they-don't-understand-it. He liked the book; he liked its cynicism and the fact that it had nothing whatsoever to do with his life. As he read, the sun rose further, sliding underneath an opaque expanse of clouds, like a layer of dirty vanilla frosting on the sky.

He put the book on the seat next to him and rubbed his eyes. For a while he stared into the grey space beyond the windshield. His mind drifted. The windows slowly covered with opaque condensation. He heard the crunch of footsteps on the gravel, but he couldn't seem to decide on an appropriate course of action. His brain seemed sluggish and useless.

Three sharp raps came on the driver's side window.

"Hello." The voice was muffled through the glass.

"Yes." He tried to sound nonchalant. He rolled the window down a couple more inches and turned three-quarters to the open window in a clumsy attempt to block any sight of the rest of the car.

"Are you planning to be here all day?" He could see that the woman was elderly, her eyes, he hoped, full of cataracts, and her mind senile.

"Well, no... not really."

"Oh, well, I just thought you might like some lunch."

"Oh."

The air seemed to condense with silence, become unbearably heavy, then break.

"So, would you?"

"Huh?"

"Like some lunch?"

"Sure." The word surprised him; it had slipped out.

"Fine. I'm in the brick house two doors down. One fifty seven. We'll have some sandwiches."

His breath returned to him as he heard her walk away.

He knew that the best thing, really the only thing that made any sense for him to do, was to turn the car on, put it in gear and drive to the other side of the city. Put as many miles between him and the old woman as possible. But there was something about her offer— its mundane kindness, its irregularity— which made him want to go. He thought of the solitary afternoon stretching out in front of him, the long grey hours like iron bars across the sky. At least it was something different.

After stowing the marijuana and its apparatus underneath the seat and weathering a brief panic attack that revolved around the possibility of the whole thing being some sort of bizarre police set-up, he got out of the car and slowly made his way down the street.

"Come in, come in." He noticed the deep-set lines in her face, the grey-blue eyes shining out from the loose flesh of her face. She ushered him down a hall decorated with photographs of various people, some from many years before, the figures posed formal and unsmiling. The light from a window caught the tight grey curls that crowned the old woman's head. Her body was like a small mound buried under her flowing dress.

The hall opened up into a small dining room. At the room's center was a large table draped with a lace cloth. The table was surrounded by three large hutches with glass doors. The room seemed dwarfed by the furniture. On the table was a round tray with several small triangular sandwiches flanked on one side by a large pitcher of iced tea.

"Sit down, young man, please."

He pulled an old ladder-backed chair out from the table and sat.

"Let me get you a plate." She reached into a hutch just to his left and placed a small plate in front of him. For a moment he stared at the intricate flower design that rimmed the plate. He knew he should say something, but couldn't find anything to say. The name of the middling-sized plate drifted into his mind.

"Salad plate." He looked up at her.

"How's that?" She took a seat just to his left.

"Ah, nice plate."

"Oh, thank you. This set was part of a wedding gift from my family. My dowry," she smirked. "Eat. Have some sandwiches. Oh,

damn, I forgot to get you a glass." She got up and shuffled over to the hutch behind him.

"I apologize. My mind's not what it used to be."

"That's OK." His mouth was partly full of sandwich. He felt like an idiot, wolfing down the tiny sandwiches in front of the old woman. He concentrated on his chewing, trying to slow his pace.

The woman poured him tea into a tall glass etched with an interlocking loop design.

"So, what's your name?" She watched him eat.

"Wesley."

Silence. The crisp snap of raw cucumbers.

"And what do you do, Wesley?"

"I go to school, the community college... my class was canceled." She knows, he thought. He had a vision of her like an old crone out of a fairy tale, luring him into her lair.

"Oh. My son Roger used to go there. Went for a year then dropped out."

He reached for another sandwich. She's just what she seems, he reassured himself, a loopy old dame who probably gets as much company as the residents of the average mausoleum do.

"My, you have a good appetite."

"Didn't have time for breakfast today. So, your son, where is he now."

"Oh, California, out there with all the sunshine and the misfits."

He felt better now. His mind was clearing. It was like a visit to Grandma's house, he thought.

"I like these sandwiches. No crust."

"Yes, they're tea sandwiches. I make them every noontime. My husband Russell always said I was too much of an Anglophile, but he liked the sandwiches too."

"An anglophile?"

"Lover of British culture and food, although they're certainly longer on culture than cuisine." She smiled at him. "Excuse me, I'll be right back." She slowly rose and walked through a doorway along the same wall as the one they had come in.

He looked at the painting on the far wall, an idyllic scene of three boys on a sidewalk along a river. One of the boys leaned over a steel fence that ran along the river. The whole thing was painted so the colors all sort of ran together, all oranges and blues and pinks.

The woman returned carrying a large crystal decanter on a tray. She placed the tray on the table and he saw that it also had two glasses with fluted ends that made them appear as if they were blooming.

"Do you like sherry, my boy?" She poured a measure of dark liquid from the decanter into the two glasses.

"Ah, I'm not sure." This was going to be a story he could tell his friends about: the time I got drunk with this old lady.

"Well, I enjoy a little sherry in the afternoon. You'd probably do better with beer, but, without Russell and the boys around, I don't keep any."

"Here's to... education." She handed him a glass. They clinked their glasses together.

He lifted the glass to his lips and drank, the amber liquid more like whiskey than the sweet wine he has expecting. He coughed a little.

She smiled at him. "Slowly, slowly. Sherry is a gentlemen's drink."

He took a small sip and felt the warmth of the alcohol radiate from his mouth. For a moment he wanted to make up some excuse to go back to his car and take another hit from the pipe, but then thought better of it.

"So, what's your name?"

"Mrs. Matilda Markowitz, but you can call me Maddy."

"OK, Maddy, why'd you invite me in for lunch?"

"Well, I always eat alone. Everyday alone. It gets dreary and so awfully boring. I think that's the worst part of getting old, not the aches and pains, not even death, but the boredom. Anyway, I thought it'd be nice to have company for lunch and when I saw you out there for so long I figured you might be hungry.

He watched her, looking for cues to respond to, thinking perhaps he should have contemplated the possibility of ground glass in the sandwiches and poison in the iced tea more seriously before he ate. But then he thought of the guidance councilors at his old high school, always trying to tell him what to think and how to think it, as if reality was one thing, fixed and permanent like some ancient god. Maybe she deserved some leeway, maybe we all do. She only looked past him to the doorway they had come in through.

"I remember when Russell and I first moved in here. We used to have company all the time." She smiled, lifting the sherry to her lips. "But that was almost forty years ago."

"Oh." He said. He tried to imagine what it would be like to remember something that had happened forty years ago. He felt empty, as if there was a hole dug deep into his chest where his heart should have been.

She looked down at her watch. "Oh, my, it's almost two. Time for my show."

"Your show?"

"My soap. You know, daytime TV. You're welcome to stay and watch with me, if you'd like."

He felt the pull of the solitary confinement of the car. He looked at his watch. One-fifty. If he went back to the car now, he would

have to find something to do for the next four hours in order to maintain the plausibility of his actually attending school that day. Even masturbating got old after a while.

"Ah, OK."

"Great. I'm not taking you away from your studies am I?"

"Oh, no."

She filled their glasses and set them on the tray, which he carried into the room adjacent to the dining room.

The television sat in the far corner. The far wall also had a large picture window that looked out on the street and ivy strewn chain link fence. Just to his right was a large green sofa made of an uncomfortable materiel of short, coarse fibers. He felt a momentary surge of panic as he noticed a set of binoculars on the end table closest to the picture window, but then it subsided of its own accord. On the wall to his left was a large oval African tribal mask of dark carved wood and a long plume of dark hair at the top. He stared at it.

"Oh, that's my African queen. It's a bridal mask of the Massi. The bride makes it herself in the days before her wedding. She even uses her own hair, there at the top. Russell hated it—he made me take it down when his parents came to visit. I always wanted to go to Africa, but Russell wouldn't hear of it. Israel, that's where we should go. Ah, I hated it— the expectation that this country that I'd never been to before, that was so unlike any country I'd ever lived in, was supposed to be my homeland... I just couldn't quite believe it. Russell was always much more of a true believer."

She turned on the TV, and they sat together on the couch, the tray of sherry glasses and the decanter between them. They sat in silence, sipping their sherry.

The show was what he remembered of soap operas— an unlikely convergence of events done in absurdly maudlin tones. But, he had to admit, it was relaxing, sitting on the couch with the sherry and all.

"Might I have another bit of your sherry, Ma'am," he said in his best British accent.

"Splendid!" She shrieked in her own mock accent, sounding like a Yiddish Margaret Thatcher. "The Lady of the manor would like another as well." She went on and poured them each a glass.

"I say, this is the most lovely sherry I've ever had," he said, accent intact.

"I say, this is the only sherry you've ever had." Peals of laughter sprang through her words, and they both laughed. "My husband always *despised* sherry." She emphasized despised to an absurd degree. "He said it tasted like distilled sawdust."

"Sawdust?" He lifted an eyebrow, trying to look like the host of Masterpiece Theater. "Ridiculous!"

"Yes, well, we never did see eye to eye on anything anyhow." She was warming to the accent now, the spit flying. "And to think, we were married forty-three years. Forty-three long boring years." Her laughter rang out again. He laughed too, although now he was unsure why.

"You don't have the foggiest what I'm talking about, do you lad?" She was the only one laughing now.

He looked down and shifted uncomfortably on the scratchy couch.

"Oh, deary, the things you don't know, my boy." She maintained the accent.

He looked up.

"Oh, to be young and stupid again." He tried to work this into a compliment. "I used to be young, you know. I was quite a dish. I was considered to have a spectacular figure. Men of my day were all mad for breasts, which I thought was just great. Of course it turned out that most of them just wanted mommy." She smiled at him, her accent falling away.

"I remember when Russell and I were first together. It was glorious. Russell'd come over after working in his parent's store, in the late afternoon, before my roommate came home. We'd make love in my bedroom, neither of us speaking a word until after. I remember there was a lilac bush in front of my window, and when the breeze blew in the sent of lilac would cover us. It was... a moment."

He looked up at her; he could almost see the lines recede from her face as she clung to her vision of the past.

"You must have been very happy."

"I didn't know enough to be happy. I thought that was the world— warm scented breeze and love making— working just enough to keep it going." She seemed to slump back into her age. "Well, how about another, young man. I'm sure there's still plenty of scented breeze ahead for you." She smiled at him without revealing her teeth, her lips forming a straight line across her face.

He imagined making love in the warmth of afternoon, slowly, on a bed that was his own. The tight coil of anxiety curled out from his brain, choking off his vision.

On the window he noticed the intermittent rain, the remnants of each drop leaving tiny question marks on the pane.

She poured them each another glass.

"To scented breeze." She smiled at him and drank her glass down. He sipped his drink, trying to clear his mind.

Her eyes seemed glazed over, as if she was looking at something in the distance.

"Then I got the cancer. I was terrified at first, but then it seemed as if the surgery worked. I figured that a breast was a small

price to pay—they had done their duty by then anyway. My sons were long past needing them. But Russell. He never understood. From then on, I was diseased, like I should have died." She stopped and stared for a moment.

He felt a tide of disgust rise in his stomach almost despite himself. He wondered what was left where her breast had been, imagining a long pink scar left in the breast's place.

"Let's have another now." She bent down and poured herself another glass full, spilling some on the tray as she did so. "And for you, lad."

"No, really that's—"

"Not a bit of it." She filled his glass up and over the rim, creating a small lake of spilt sherry on the tray. He smiled and lifted his glass.

"To old times." He said, for lack of anything else to toast. She broke into sheets of laughter.

"Yes, my boy, old times." She sat down again, still laughing. He sat silent and still. The woman downed her drink.

"So..." He looked at her; she just stared at some indeterminate point in front of her. A butter-voiced announcer from a vacuum cleaner ad wafted in from the TV. The rain drumming on the window had become heavier now. "Where's your other son?"

"Donald? I don't know." She laughed again, her laughter taking on a hysterical edge. "Perhaps on the moon!" Her laughter trailed off almost to a whisper. "Yes, my moon-boy." She looked off again.

He shifted on the couch. Everything seemed uncomfortable now. The temperature seemed to rise by the second. He wanted to leave, to get up and run, out the door, down the street, past his car, his house, his whole life. It was as if his life had come down to this interminable moment with a crazy old lady. He rose.

"Well, thanks for the lunch and—"

"Just like his father. He was... just like his father." The accent was gone now. She was staring off and talking, as if to herself.

"That's too bad, I guess." The silence engulfed him for several eternal minutes, like the moments before the tight rope walker totters on the rope. His head hurt. He wanted to drive home, tell his mother he was ill, and go to bed. "I've got to go."

She said nothing, only stared.

As he got to the entryway to the hall, he heard her say, "Just like his father" once more.

He paused at the doorway for a moment, then walked through and shut the door softly behind him.

Rain stormed down on him as he walked back to his car. Water washed over his face and ran into his mouth. He felt numb, as if his mind had left his body completely.

The car turned over without complaint, and he made his way down the water-strewn street.

A vague sinking lump sank into his gut as he drove. Before he reached the end of the block it assumed the definite form of nausea.

The sherry, he thought, all the awful sherry that woman forced on me. His mouth watered sickeningly. He pulled the car over and stepped out into the downpour.

He slipped down the gully at the side of the road. Water ran in swift torrents through the ditch. The force of his vomit nearly drove his face into the water. He kneeled just above it and vomited again.

After it was over, he lay back on the wet grass. He felt clean and pure, as if the rain had washed away all that Maddy had revealed to him. He looked up at the darkening sky.

Nathaniel Beyer

Alice Carter

Refuge, 1938

"Emil is coming tonight,
your father went to New York"—
my mother was cooking with fury
daring the chicken to de-pot itself—
"to pick him out of the group
of refugees arriving from Germany."
She was cooking from
the Settlement House cookbook.
I took a look—matzo ball soup.
Our town had no Jews, a blight
my mother would correct and right.

Emil had wild eyes, as if he
had been roped to the rail of the boat.
"I cannot impossibly eat the chicken,"
he said. The chicken—roasted to a shiny brown—
was dead. He had left so many dead
in the Rhine Valley, and fled two booted SS
for refuge in our New Hampshire town.
"I eat only vegetables now," the table spread
with now inedible food except
the parsnips and brussels sprouts,
I thought them a poor trade,
but Emil stayed.

Later, in my father's darkroom
Emil and I developed film, a red light
over the door kept us shut in
while we developed pictures
he shared with me
the ones he took in Germany
no film—just the memory
of the camps, of the dead.
"Why didn't you come sooner?"
"Grandmother—I couldn't impossibly
leave her. The day she die
I fled."

"Scottie"
Acrylic on Clayboard
Kathryn Soderstrom

"Horse, Stage 2"
Acrylic on Paper
Heather Burke

"Horse, Stage 3"
Acrylic on Paper
Heather Burke

"Angry Little Girl, No Arms"
Acrylic on Canvas
Heather Burke

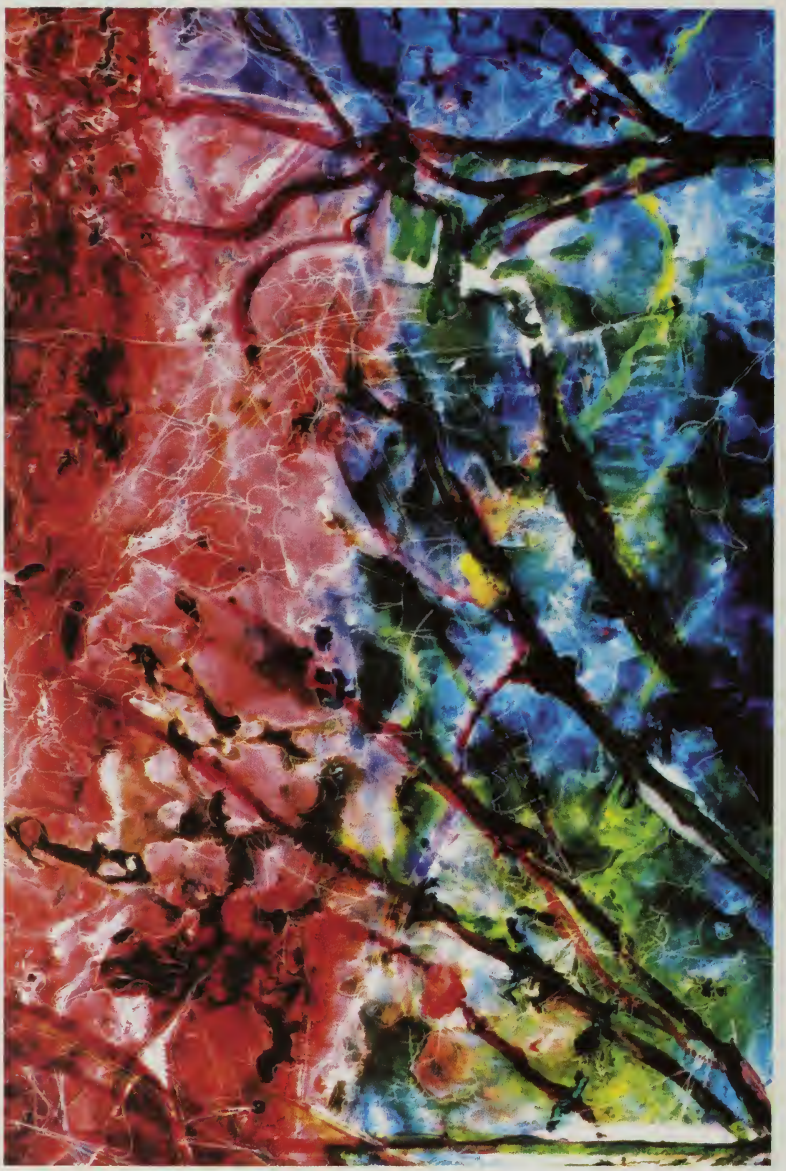
"Self-Portrait"
Oil on Ipson Board
Michelle Babbitt

"Games"
Painting on Wood
Suthi L. Picotte-Harper

"Dancer"
Painting
Suthi L. Picotte-Harper

"Rebirth"
Acrylic on Canvas
Cristin Chmielinski

"Innocence Lost"
Acrylic on Canvas
Cristin Chmielinski



"Black Widow Spider"
Mixed Media
Judith Listernick

"Roller Coaster"
Mixed Media
Judith Listernick

"Boston 3 Piece"
Acrylic on Canvas
Nick Zaremba

"Intersection At Mass Art"
Oil Pastel on Gessoed Cardboard
Nick Zaremba

"Negotiated Space"
Acrylic on Canvas
Nick Zaremba

"Street Lights"
Acrylic on Canvas
Josephine Bottari

"Celebration Of The Goddess Within"
Acrylic on Canvas
Cristin Chmielinski

Nathaniel Beyer

Punch Drunk

I've been waiting. I don't know how long. The fluorescent lights make my eyes throb, but I don't care. My daughter's having an operation. It's her spine. It curves. Radical scoliosis. All part of the thing. . . the syndrome, they call it. A syndrome. Means they don't know what the hell it is, but they have to call it something, so it's a syndrome. I mean, who would pay thousands of dollars for some goddam doctor, some specialist, who called your daughter's illness a "thing," or had the aufuckingdacity to admit they didn't have the slightest sliver of a clue about what it is that she's got. So it's syndrome. Makes it all better, the tests, the surgeries, the bills. As if I should just go home and say 'see, its's only a syndrome. It's not really some god-awful thing that modern science and technology can only scratch their collective nuts about. It's a syndrome.'

"Miss, I don't mean to be rude, but your daughter may be in post-op for two or three more hours." It's the nurse again, the one with the coffee breath that makes me want to retch. "Maybe you should go home and rest for a while. The doctor said—"

"I know what the doctor said. She's resting comfortably. What I want to know is how someone can be resting comfortably with a steel rod shoved up their spine?"

"I can assure you that every effort—"

"It seems like people are always resting comfortably in this place. Could be dying of cancer, but they're resting comfortably. I mean, this place must be better than the damn Marriot. Better drugs, no doubt." I can feel the traitorous tears will in my eyes.

"I'm sorry." Her face drops; she gives me a look of sadness and irritation, like she's constipated on her wedding day. She turns quickly and walks back down the corridor to the nurse's station. I can hear he plastic nurse's shoes squeak on the polished tile.

I ignore the goddam tears. Goddam useless tears. When I was younger and prettier and dumber, I used to believe in tears. I remember when I found out that Bill was cheating with one of his coed sycophants. The little dear couldn'tuv been more than 20, maybe 21. And here's Bill, forty-something, playing the scholarly wise man, elbow patches on his corduroy jacket and all, probably telling her the same bullshit he told me when we first got together. Wonder if he ever had faculty wives, and I'm at home, on something like my fifth scotch,

waiting for the bastard. He gets home, and I'm livid, screaming, throwing his stuff at him, telling him to get out. Then the tears. He takes me in his arms, to comfort me. Probably just blew his wad in his little girlfriend, and now he tries to comfort me. But by then I'm too drunk to resist. I'm crying, and I can see his face getting red. It's sinking in now, what he's done. He talks softly to me, through a wall of guilt. His voice barely rises above the level of a buzzing fly. I can't even piece together how it happens, but we decide to "work it out." We had to try "for Joey's sake." Of course, Joey's sixteen and only wants to stay in his room and smoke dope and play air guitar to his collection of Led Zeppelin records. I'm not sure that he would've noticed if we both'd disappeared entirely. But now Bill's crying, telling me what a fool he is, wanting me to forgive him. Then we decide to have another kid.

So a couple'a months later, I'm pregnant, and everything revolves around pregnancy and my volcanic hormones. He's home every night, asking me about my day, making sure I'm eating right, staying away from the drink. And I'm starting to feel like a host. But then she's born. Everything's normal at first, another lovable little person-larva at home, and I'm thinking how we made the right choice, and what a changed person he is and all. Then the whole thing comes to a halt. Not all at once, but slowly, a little every day. The beautiful child slowly recedes from me, replaced by this girl who only sits looking at her hands flash in front of her face. No walking, no talking, nothing. . .

And then the seizures. The first time I thought for sure she was dying. I held her, and her whole body shook. I almost dropped her scrambling for the phone. I dialed 911, and that's when the doctors got involved. Toxicology tests, developmental tests, genetic tests, tests, tests, tests. At first it was autism, then severe, generic retardation, then maybe MS. When the scoliosis started, it seemed so benign. Scoliosis. Might as well have been chicken pox after everything else. But then it got worse, and worse, until it threatened to compress her internal organs slowly, but surely as a hydraulic press. About the same time the scoliosis started, we noticed some of the doctors looking at us funny, making vague suggestions, like *we* must have done something. That's when I knew Bill wasn't going to make it. I could see it in his eyes after the doctor visits. He couldn't take it. Too real. Not like those great theoretical demons he slew at the university. This demon knew where you lived. It was there between us at every restaurant, every cocktail party. I mean it was *intimate* and inescapable. But not for big talkin' Bill. Right in the middle of the nightmare, he says "I can't handle this. We need some time apart. I've got a sabbatical coming in September, and I need to go alone." I didn't know if he'd found another young fool, but by then I was so overwhelmed, I didn't even respond, not right away. Later I wrote him a long letter while he was on sabbatical "sorting things out" explaining to him that he was, in word and deed, a coward,

and I couldn't live with that. He called me, worried that the 'I can't live with that' part meant I was going to off myself.

Oh, shit, I need a cigarette. What is that smell in every hospital I've ever been in? Like shit and death thinly veiled by carbolic acid. I can feel the nurses' eyes on me as I pass by the station. I'm sure they've circulated several ugly little stories about me by now. I know it's not their fault; they're just young and don't know any better. Where is the crusty veteran nurse to explain things to all these young maidens? Must be her day off.

Outside, it's all parking lots and cornfields. The hospital is on the edge of the suburb I live in, where the malignant pavement meets the dirt. Always seems so strange to me: strip malls, cinder block buildings and fast food restaurants rising out of the fields like some sort of obscene monument to bad taste and inappropriateness.

"Nice day, huh?"

By this time I've huffed down my cigarette so fast that I'm dizzy.

"Sure, why not."

"You wouldn't have an extra cigarette, would you?" The kid can't be eighteen. His face looks like real carnage; his hair's the short-in-front, long-in-the-back style my son would have referred to as hockey hair.

"Sure kid, knock yourself out." I hand him the pack and lighter. Then I notice. The kid's a goddamn *candy striper*. I feel like I'm going to pass out.

"Thanks." I watch him fumble around with the lighter and cigarette. He holds the cigarette between his ring and index fingers and brings his whole hand to his face to light the damn thing. He's got his candy striper apron undone; it dangles in front of him, occasionally catching the wind.

"You know, smoking isn't good for you, and it certainly won't make you look any cooler." Here I have to suppress my laughter. "Just go up to the oncology department and ask them."

"Look, lady, I don't need a lecture. I just want to smoke. It's bad enough I have to be a candy-striper." He has an odd way of looking near you, but not exactly at you, when he speaks.

"I'm just trying to clear my conscience for giving you the cigarette in the first place. How come you're candy striping, or whatever they call it?"

He scowls in my general direction in that way only teenage boys can scowl.

"Community service. Got caught busting into a car over on Fifteenth, so I gotta do a hundred hours of this." He gestures to his apron. "I'd rather do a hundred hours in a morgue."

"Well, I think there's a morgue in the basement. Maybe you can do your time there." I think I'm about to lose control of my bladder. This must be what they call punch drunk.

"You got a smart mouth, lady."

"I'm sorry, but you have to admit it's kinda funny. You know, hard time on the geriatric ward and all."

He looks down for a moment at the tips of his canvas sneakers, which are covered with some sort of ink drawing that seems to have vaguely Satanic overtones.

"Yeah, I guess it is sorta funny." He smiles out at the parking lot.

"Here you go, kid." I hand him another cigarette. "See you later."

Back in the ward, my dizziness is gone.

"Ma'am, you can see your daughter now, " the nurse calls tome from a few feet away. I walk slightly behind her as we march down the hall. My feet feel suddenly heavy. For a moment I wish I could be carried into the room. The nurse's voice snaps me back.

"She's lost a fair amount of blood. They also put in the food tube while she was under. It'll make things easier. The biggest concern now is secondary infection. We'll be monitoring her closely: temp, BP, all the usual."

"OK."

The nurse stops at the threshold of the small room. "I'll let you have some time alone."

I step into the room, and I see her lying there, under the bright light. Everything looks white and metallic, all the machines, their wires and tubes. I'm almost squinting. The shades are pulled. She stares straight ahead.

I reach down from the side of the bed. Her face looks so pale, even more than usual. Her eyes are groggy, distant. And her chest, the whole angle of it now so stiff, erect like she's lying on a board. I brush her hair out of her eyes. She looks up at me.

"Everything's going to be all right now. Mommy's here."

Nathaniel Beyer

Danny Slaton

Victims not Dumped in the River

I was disgusted at my yard when I got home from work. Parasitic weeds sprang through the cracks in the concrete path to my front door, stealing the nutrients that rightfully belonged to the grass of my manicured lawn. These awful weeds were pillaging the fragile ecosystem I paid Ted the landscaper so much to build.

I didn't go inside; I headed straight for the garage. There were plenty of bottles: pesticides, lubricants, anti-freeze. . . but no weed killer. I rummaged through my purse for my keys, and upon finding them, pointed the little black device at my car, pushed the button, and opened the doors. Before getting in, I turned back towards the lawn.

I'll be back, with poison.

The road was stuffed with automobilers and their vehicles, honking, talking on phones, playing rotten music too loud. I joined them with my windows rolled up and turned on the radio.

"You've got no case, alright?!" "No, now listen" -fzzz- "la pelota esta en el centro fundo. . . goooaaal!" -fzzz- "my grandfather was killed in a poison gas attack in the first world war" -fzzz- "his attitude is poisoning the rest of the team. He thinks he's the only one running the plays" -fzzz- click.

Nothing good on the radio.

Traffic moved in miniature ejaculations. My patience was disintegrating, but I finally pulled into the hardware store. Just as I was about to get out, I saw someone flip the sign in the store window—Closed. I beat on my steering wheel until my hands were bruised.

I rejoined traffic, but carelessly this time. I outmaneuvered everyone, racing through one yellow light after another. My driving was one long, angry orgasm, through tight spots that were too risky for the weaker drivers.

I put my key into the front door lock, but retracted upon an inspiration—*anti-freeze!* I ran into the garage and grabbed the greasy bottle of Texaco anti-freeze/coolant. This was poison.

I marched out to the head of the lawn, and proudly faced the weed ridden concrete path. I dropped my purse, and opened the bottle. I poured the anti-freeze, in small amounts, on every weed I could find. When I'd done that, I still had some left over. I poured the remainder into the still weedless cracks—a preemptive strike.

I returned the cap to the bottle, and set it down next to the front door. I walked in and could hear Lloyd talking on the phone in the kitchen. I was relieved; my anger was finally subsiding after my herbicidal spree. I joined Lloyd in the kitchen.

He put his hand over the mouth piece— "Hi, honey. Will you let Ralph out, I haven't had a chance?"

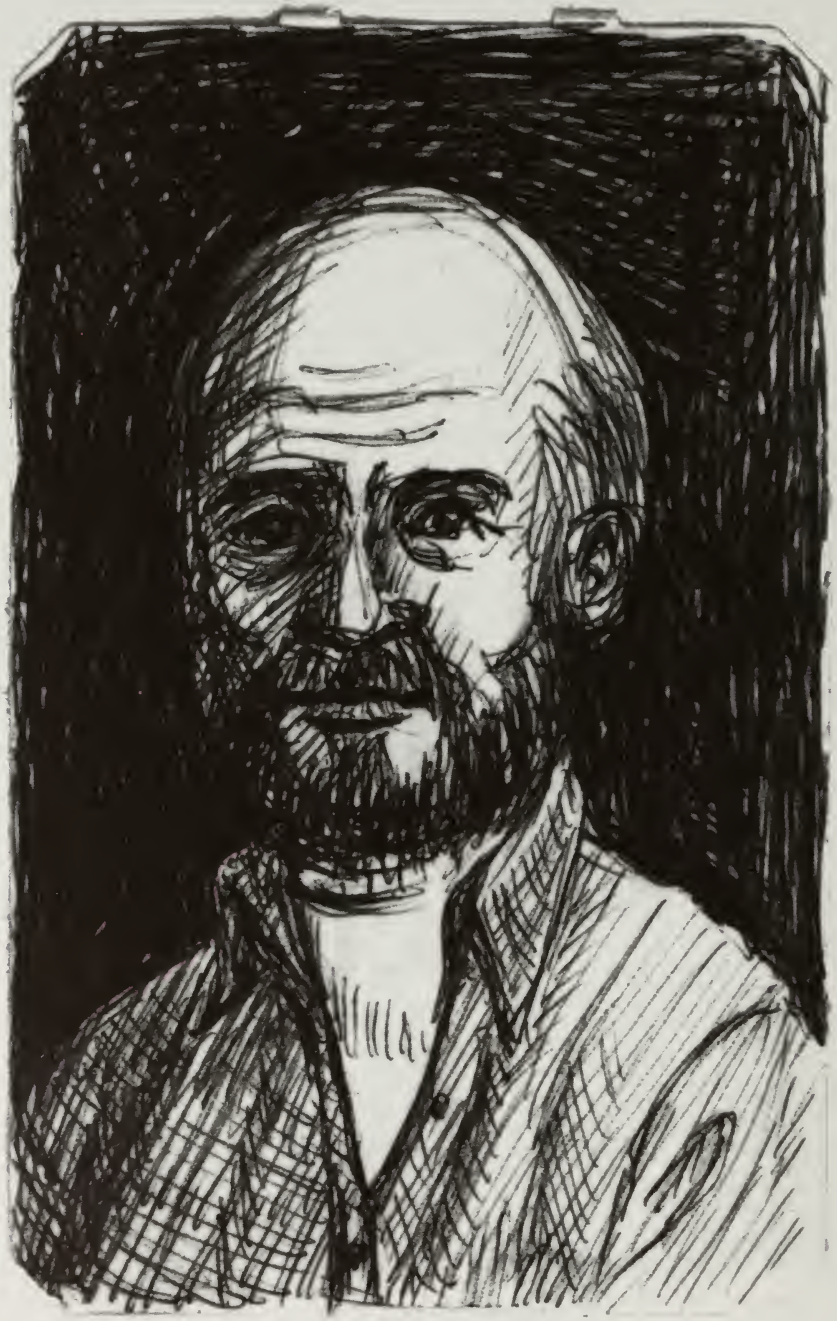
I nodded, and went to the laundry room door in the hall leading to the garage. I could hear scratching and whimpering, and opened the door. Ralph, our husky mutt, attacked me with affection. I led him to the front door and let him outside. He raced out immediately to the grass and began to urinate. He'd been waiting a long time to pee. I closed the door and returned to the kitchen.

Lloyd and I exchanged bits of our days while I made coffee. He suggested that we go out to dinner—maybe Thai or Vietnamese. I agreed, on Vietnamese. Someone knocked on the front door. We both went to answer it.

Lloyd opened the door to find our neighbor Simon. He was looking at the ground, crying. I looked out at the yard. Ralph laid motionless next to a small puddle of green, foamy vomit. His head rested at the very edge of the concrete path, very near to one of the weedless cracks I had land-mined earlier.

Danny Slaton

"Tornado Tree"
Drypoint Etching
Alison Lindburg



"Self-Portrait"
Pen and Ink
Herbert Kirshnit

"Waiting For Class"
Pen and Ink
Herbert Kirshnit

"Believe"
Charcoal on Paper
Zhixin Fang

"Self-Portrait #2"
Charcoal on Paper
Justin Hughes

Danny Slaton

Family Tree

We built grandma into a tree
in the backyard
That way, we can't hear her
struggle to breathe
mumble about the past
Dad won't complain
But then again, there's a tree out there
waiting for him

Steven Hornsby

Waiting

David was an average 10-year old who liked to play baseball and hockey with his friends. He traded Pokemon cards and played Gameboy. His father was an important businessman who was only around at night and sometimes on a Sunday here and there. David's mother worked at the local supermarket in the floral department and usually was home when he was; she worked while he was at school.

David came home from school on a Wednesday afternoon and no one was there so he checked the kitchen and found the usual snack on the table with a note:

> Honey,
> I'm working this afternoon.
> Make sure to do your homework
> before you go out.
> Love,
> Mom

The plan was to go to The Lot to play hockey with his friends just a few blocks away like usual but he was supposed to do homework first. He could just do it when he got home; it wouldn't be a problem.

Grabbing his skates and reaching for his stick, David felt a twinge of guilt and almost gave in to it and stayed home. The feeling quickly passed and he left his homework waiting. He raced out the back door and headed to the trail in the woods, which was a short cut to The Lot.

The woods were pretty large in all, but this particular part was thin; he would only have to travel through for a few minutes. Emerging a few minutes later right behind The Lot, which was nothing more than an abandoned parking lot; he quickly put on his skates. He had spent countless afternoons there playing all kinds of sports with the neighborhood kids.

All his friends were there, and the hockey game was already on so he jumped on a team and off he went. They played for a few hours and David played the best he had played ever, scoring 4 goals and 2 assists. It then began to get dark, and although there were lights, and the game would go on for another hour, he decided that it was about time to head home before his mother got back.

Normally, at dusk, David would take the long way and walk around the woods to get home but since he wanted to get home early to explain to his mom why he didn't do his homework first, he decided to take the quick way through the woods. A three-minute run through safe woods at night can be scary for anyone, especially to a 10-year old, and David was no exception. He gathered his things, stood at the entrance to the woods, took a deep breath, and headed in.

About halfway into his short trip, he thought he heard voices and footsteps so he ducked behind a tree. He was right, there were two girls just up ahead in the path he was taking. Staying behind the tree, he hoped they wouldn't notice him and continue on their way.

He managed to peak around the tree and saw that the girls both shared in the chore of dragging a large black trash bag behind them. He turned back and froze like a deer in headlights, unable to breathe and extremely thankful he had the protection of the tree. All he knew was that he was scared and he could hear the girls talking as they approached.

"Calm down!" the first girl said.

"This is so messed up!" the second girl nervously cried.

"Don't worry, nobody saw us, and it was an accident. . . kind of. We won't get caught," the first girl replied.

David remained frozen with fear as the girls stopped and dropped the bag right in front of the tree that was concealing him. He realized that he hadn't taken a breath in a while so he slowly exhaled and then quietly inhaled hoping to calm himself without being noticed.

"What if we do get caught though?" the second girl voiced.

"I told you not to worry, we aren't going to. Everything we touched, we wiped off, and as long as nobody sees us, we're fine." The first answered. "Now help me, we have to hurry."

Just as they were about to pick up the bag, David felt a tickle in his nose. One of his hands was purple from holding the laces of his skates, and the other was holding his hockey stick.

He had to sneeze.

He gently leaned his stick against his chest and reached to his nose to block but it was too late.

He managed to sneeze quite softly, but not enough to escape the attention of the two girls who were almost on their way.

"What was that?" The second girl asked.

"I don't know. It came from over here." The first began to make her way around the tree where David hid.

He didn't give her a chance to get him. He took off furiously running towards his house.

"Get him!" the first girl commanded the second.

The second girl gave chase. Even though David had a head start, she was gaining on him. He dropped his skates and stick and

pushed himself to the maximum, hoping he would just reach the safety of his back yard. She almost stumbled over the forgotten skates but jumped over them and continued her pursuit, still gaining.

His house was within sight and a flood of hope washed over him. He felt great relief that instantly disappeared when his foot caught on a root that was sticking out of the ground and he was sent flying in the air, legs and arms flailing wildly, and landed with a thud onto a pile of rocks. He felt a sharp pain in his left leg and arm simultaneously and he painfully looked down to see the white tip of bone showing through the ripped pants, blood seeping through. His arm felt the same way, but when he checked it, there was no blood but he could not move it at all.

The girl reached him seconds later and immediately pounced on him covering his mouth to keep him from screaming. Since it was then extremely dark he couldn't get a good look at his attacker during the struggle. The only distinction he could make out was that she was a young teenage girl with very long dark hair.

She dragged him back to the tree in which he was hiding where the first girl was waiting. David was almost completely out of energy from his struggle and he focused on the pain from his injuries trying to breathe.

"What the hell is this?" the first girl asked. "Where did you come from, you little bastard?" she questioned as she gave him a strong kick to the chest.

Tears ran down David's face and onto the hand of the second girl's hand, which was covering his mouth. He thought of his mother, how he wished he had listened to her and stayed home. Why didn't he listen?

The first girl continued to kick him, then abruptly stopped. David opened his eyes slightly and saw his second attacker. She looked a little older than the other, with shorter hair. His attention shifted to her wrist where there was a gold bracelet that was shining in the moonlight. He had seen that bracelet. It seemed so familiar!

"Leave him alone" the second girl pleaded. "He's had enough. He didn't hear anything."

"He knows." The first girl responded darkly while taking her belt off.

He stared unblinking at the bracelet wondering where he had seen it before. He recognized it, but couldn't place where he had seen it before. It was so familiar!

The first girl gestured to the second to bring David over to her. She complied and the first girl wrapped her belt around his neck.

"Sorry kid," the second girl whispered sympathetically, "wrong place at the wrong time I guess."

She began to tighten the belt, holding his forehead with her right hand, giving him a clear view of the bracelet as it dangled in front

of his right eye.

The belt was tightened around David's neck, cutting off his air. He didn't move, just stared at the bracelet wondering where he had seen it.

"We'll dump him in the river with the lady. No witnesses," the first said with a deadly tone.

Slowly the life was drained out of his body and just before he slipped into unconsciousness, David's thoughts drifted towards his mother, and then back to the bracelet.

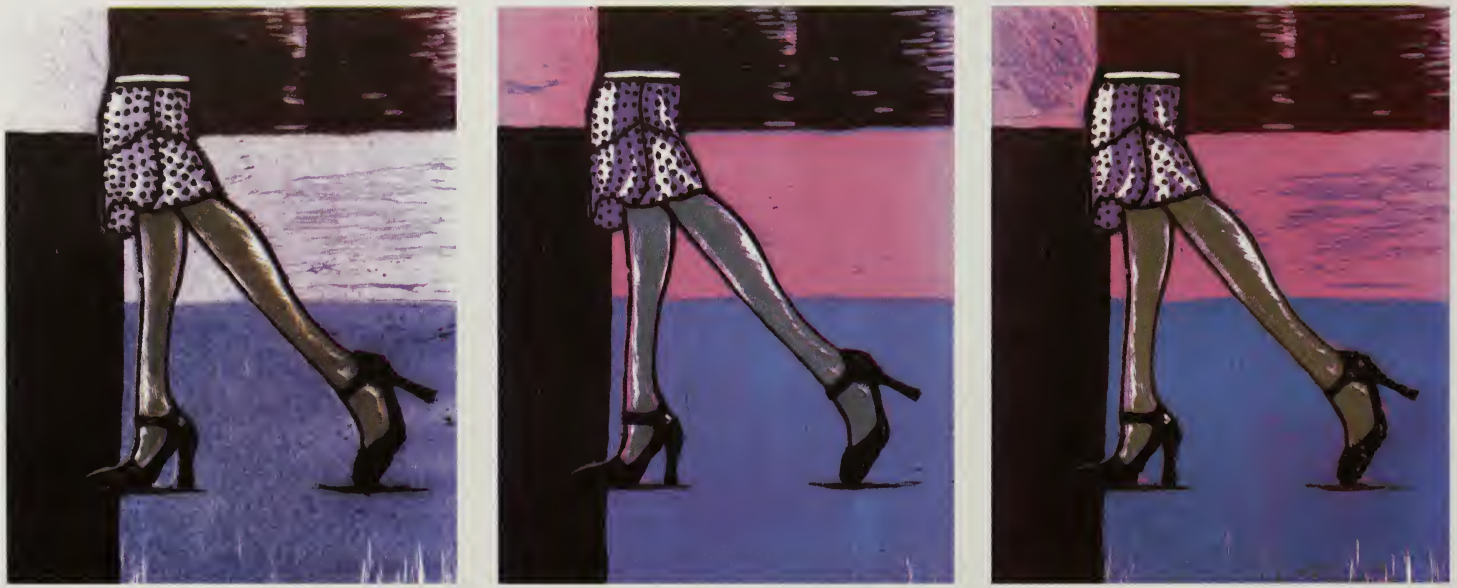
"Nobody's gonna miss either of them," the first said without feeling.

Then his body went limp, and he slipped into darkness.

David's father came home to an empty house. It was kind of a mess, but he thought nothing of it. He assumed that his wife and son had just gone out to the store for something. He got himself a drink, sat down in his easy chair, and waited for them to come home.

Steven Hornsby

"The Middle Passage and Our Redemption Story"
Etching
Kerry-Ann Thomas

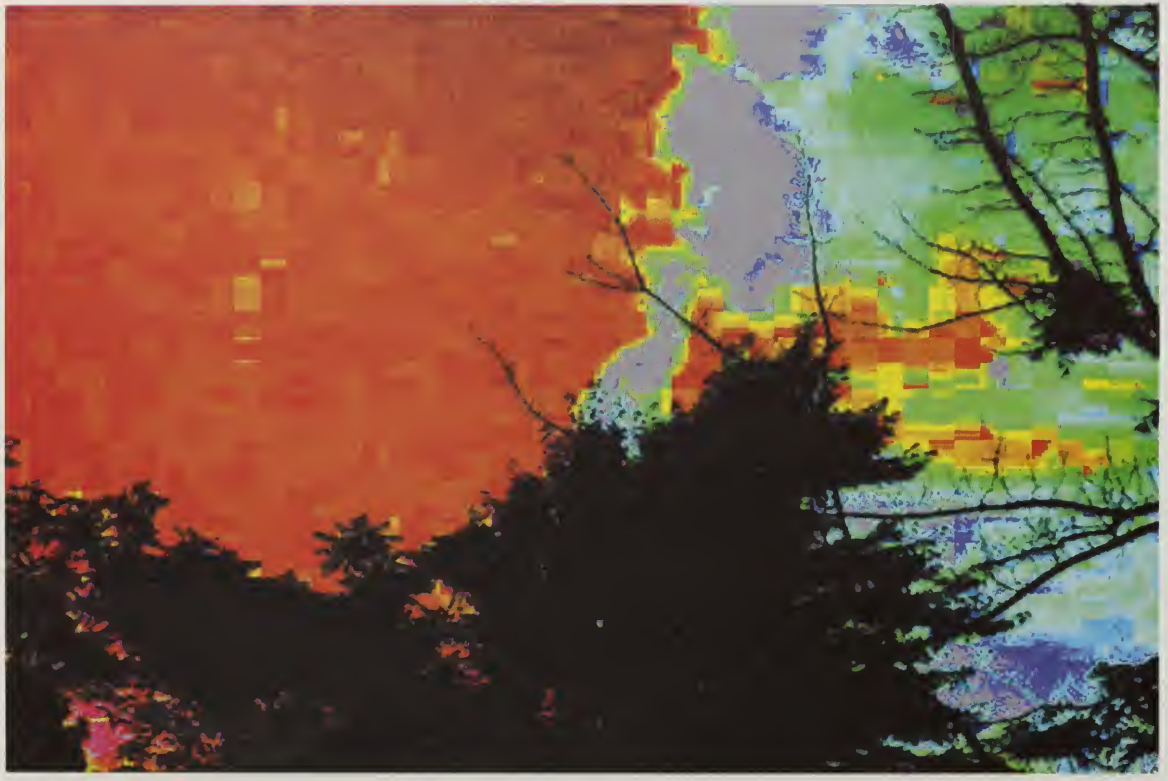


"Legs"
Subtractive Lino Cut
Alison Lindburg

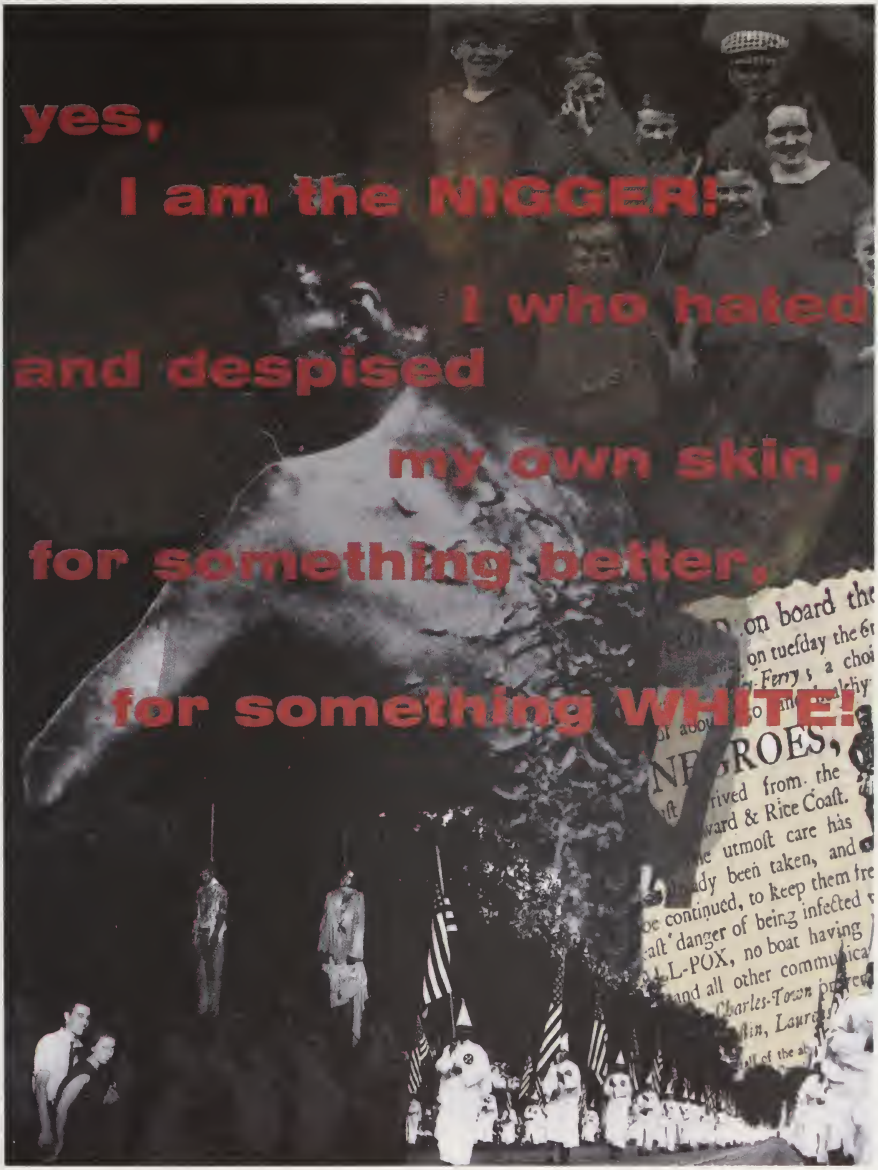
"The Spaceship"
Watercolor and Ink
Alison Lindburg

"Living Together"
Oil on Paper
Abba A. Taha

"Memories"
Oil on Paper
Abbas A. Taha



"Sky 11"
Digital Imaging
Mark Capraro



"Phases, #2"
Digital Imaging
Kerry-Ann Thomas

"Forgetting. . . "
Color Photography
Lelia Chilarescu

Kate DuToit

Eurydice's Song

A cold, hard aching has replaced
My life-giving drum. Dressed
for my funeral in lily and gold,
I descend slowly, coughing up
decaying flesh as millions of voices
begin buzzing in my ears. Freezing
flesh presses in around me, scalding
my legs, my hips, my belly, my arms.

The Prince of Hell has no words
when I pass him.
Perched upon a huge boulder,
his wings hang upon his shoulder blades,
gray and drooping from misuse.

The years pass by; I lose all feeling,
chained in a cave. Then I hear a voice —
his dazzling voice — pleading for my life.
As am I ordered, I become his shadow,
noiselessly following his back for miles.
When my blood begins pumping again,
and I can feel the sun warming my face, he
looks back. I scream as he disappears.

Back in Hell, I pass Dis.
When I see his eyes, his curling lip,
I know he has never known love
as I have.

Marvi: The Legend of the Indus Valley

The illustrious sixteenth century Sufi (Mystic) poet of Sindh, Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai (or Shah Abdul Latif of Bhit), born in 1689, was the first to immortalize Marvi in his poems recorded in his volume *Shah jo Risalo.* Hence her story became dear to the hearts of young and old alike. Since then other poets have written poems and songs about her. It is said that whenever someone sings a song about Marvi, it rains, and when that happens, people say that the sky is shedding tears!

Marvi lived in the desert of Thar in a land called Sindh. She was the daughter of a farmer called Palno and her mother's name was Madoey. A young man named Phog used to work on her father's farm. When Marvi grew up, he asked for her hand in marriage but Marvi was already engaged to someone, hence her parents refused Phog's proposal. He became angry and began thinking of ways to hurt the family.

One day he went to the ruler of Thar, king Umer of Soomro dynasty, and said,"Sire, I know of a girl who has fairy like beauty. She has a shining face resembling the radiance of the sun. She is fit to be your wife and belongs in your palace." King Umer used to talk of justice but when he heard praise of Marvi in such a manner, he forgot his royal dignity. He decided to go to Marvi's village with Phog. King Umer had disguised himself; his heart had the evil intention of trapping Marvi and bringing her to his palace at UmerKot.

Normally Marvi used to wake up at dawn and go down to the village well with her friends to fetch water, but on this day she had awoken late and had come to the well later than usual. Phog pointed her out to the king. King Umer went to her and requested that she give him some water to drink. Marvi was startled at first but her friend nudged her to offer water to the stranger. As soon as Marvi went to offer water, king Umer grabbed her arm and hoisted her on the back of his camel.

At UmerKot, he locked her inside his palace. Everyday he would send his palace servants to offer Marvi expensive and luxurious gifts to persuade her to marry him. Marvi kept refusing his gifts of silk, brocades, and jewels and refused to drink expensive sherbets and eat the rare dishes prepared by the palace cooks.

Marvi was the true daughter of the soil and a gem of a person. She considered the hunger she felt with her villagers to be tastier, and

the thirst at her village to be sweeter than the sherbets and other food stuff at the king's palace. She reckoned that the shawl she had on, given to her by her parents was more valuable then the brocades and silks that were being offered to her. The king's patience started to wear thin, and he ordered her to be locked up inside the fort and began to torture her. He imagined that this would surely bring her to her senses.

Marvi's parents and the village folk in Thar were collectively known as Maaroos. They used to refer fondly to their land Thar as Malir. They were silent at the tyranny of the king, unable to do anything to the powerful ruler. Marvi used to sit in the fort facing her village everyday and would cry, remembering her Maaroos and hoping that one day some messenger would bring her some news of them. She was courageous and resolute, so much so that she never changed the clothes she had worn since the day she was kidnapped, she just kept on re-stitching them if they became torn. She neither used any of the combs on her hair nor the lotions and ointments that the palace maids offered her; she never even opened her plaits. Marvi wished to meet the Maaroos in the same state that they last saw her in, so that no one could point a finger and say to her, "You have dishonored yourself and your land Thar." She repeatedly told the palace maids, "Thari women do not wear silk dresses, they wear cotton skirts and blouses and shawls woven from wool. The shawl that my parents gave me, I would not exchange for silken scarves and turquoise dresses. I wish to meet my fiance one day and wear milk white shawls. Black thread bands I wear on my wrists, your gifts of gold jewelry are a sign of mourning for me. It is not in Maaroo culture to exchange traditions for the love of gold. For me, living in a thatched roof house is better than living in a palace."

One day when she neared death due to hunger and thirst, she sent for king Umer. "If I die here, take my body to Malir and bury it in the soil of my land," she requested. The king was visibly moved by her physical condition, saw the truth and sincerity in her words, and decided to free her. So he sent word to the Maaroos, "Come and take what is rightfully yours." When they heard this, the Maaroos became very happy and came to take Marvi back as soon as they could. King Umer Soomro presented them with royal gifts and sent them back to their village.

When Marvi married her fiance Kethsen, he had his doubts about her being pure because she had spent so much time in captivity, so he picked fights with her at the smallest pretext. When King Umer heard that her husband was mistreating Marvi, he came with his army and attacked the village of the Maaroos. Maaroos were terrified of the king's wrath. King Umer said, "Marvi's husband's treatment of her is not only unfair to the woman who is his lawful wife but it gives us a bad name."

"If you hadn't acted in such a manner in the first place, your name and honor wouldn't have been ruined in such a way," Marvi answered him.

The king felt extremely ashamed, he therefore sent for Marvi's husband and said, "Marvi is as pure as ever. I will go through any test you set for me to prove my innocence."

Upon hearing this, Marvi said, "If there is anybody that should be tested it should be me, it will wash away the stain that has been brought upon my family's name."

Everyone agreed with that. So the entire village prepared a huge fire. An iron bar was placed inside the fire. When it became red hot, Marvi held it in her bare hands. Miraculously nothing happened to her. Upon seeing that, King Umer couldn't bear it any longer and threw himself in the fire but nothing happened to him either. The villagers became sure of Marvi's innocence, and she lived with her family happily after that.

Wazen

"Untitled"
B&W Photography
Susan Costagliola

"Self-Portrait #121"
B&W Photography
Eilene Recupero

"Self-Portrait #569"
B&W Photography
Eilene Recupero

"Derriere"
B&W Photography
Suthi L. Picotte-Harper

Dalcione Reis

Dearest Dad

I am standing at the front desk trying to make an important decision. How do I choose for someone else's life? However, this is my duty as the oldest child. It's tradition that the oldest son has to do this, but since my father had no sons, it is left to me to care for him. Why didn't my parents have a son?

As I am hunched over the mahogany desk, I hear the clatter of china as lunch is served. Am I doing the right thing? Since mom died I have lost so many nights of peaceful sleep over this situation. The final form is laid out in front of me, the deposit has been paid and it's all up to this moment. I glance back to see him. My dad, the last few months have been so hard for him. I only want him to be happy. I turn my head back and let out a sigh. I am looking at the small font of the three copy carbon form and I hold the nurse's pen in my hand.

This is it. After this is signed, my dad will be stuck here. But, it's better for him and my sister, right? My sister is in New York enjoying success with her fashion career; she's too busy to be here with me. I live in Toronto now. I can't take him with me, my life is too busy with the kids, work and the house. Why am I stalling? I've been over this so many times in my head.

The nurse clears her throat and I excuse myself. I place the pen on the line at the bottom and begin to make the letter D. Images of my dad come to mind. He was such a handsome strong man. He always loved to tell bad jokes and make other people laugh. I smile and I can feel that strange sensation in my nose whenever I am about to cry. I look back at him again. He has the afghan I crocheted for him on his lap to keep him warm in his wheelchair. I can't do this to him! I stand up straight.

Suddenly other memories came to the front of my mind. I remembered how many times I waited for him to pick me up from school. I see myself at eight years old wearing that stupid blue and gray plaid skirt with my arms crossed for warmth. He never showed. I had to walk home four miles that cold day. He said that he forgot. Forgot? Just as this thought left, others came in like a blitzkrieg. He never once came to see me perform at my recitals and never helped me with homework. He would bitch about family time, but not when soccer games, the news or anything was on TV. I don't think he even knew what I liked and disliked until I was older. He was the disciplinarian too. I can recall every instance when I was hit with some object, though never his fist. Now the feelings that I thought had subsided were swelling and throbbing like a fresh wound. They compelled me to sign the rest of my married name. I had willingly given up the Portuguese family name seven years ago and moved far away from him. Now I remember why.

I look back at my father again, this time without glossy eyes, just a smirk. The form is signed now. He would have to stay here. I kiss him on the forehead and the nurse wheels him away. Now I am watching him being wheeled down the floral print hall. My arms are crossed across my chest and I am leaning on the wall. I make sure I get a good look, because this is the last time that I'll ever see him. I am flying back up in two hours. I feel satisfied in my decision and smile with confidence. He is locked up with strangers, smelly rooms and bad food, for the rest of his lonely days. Still I hope they serve cheesecake once in a while. That's his favorite.

Dalcione Reis

"Good Morning"
B&W Photography
Walter Medina

"The Perfect Woman"
B&W Photography
Walter Medina

"Little Sister"
B&W Photography
Walter Medina

Kevin McNulty

Leviathan

"I wish that I were great
like Mr.—Michael Angelo"
-Emily Dickinson

I. An Idea is a Dead Thing

I opened my eyes that morning and saw seraphim on the ceiling,
circling six feet above me
their rounded features concealing
sharp intentions. I could not help feeling
an old nausea watching their arms, their wings,
their expressions congealing
until there was only the appearance of motion.
I felt afraid when I noticed
their hands and faces were peeling.

II. Kinesic Poetry

As I moved, the air
Behind me assumed
The shape of my absence.

This last time we'll know
More than cause, or effect
Or abandoned spaces.

III. The Artist Eats His Head

"It's the best I can do, this
imitation, misinformation
all I owe
is my creation, this
condemnation
all I know is what I'm told, all I know
is stillborn destiny, no
one's
responsibility, two hundred and six bones
self
pity-

four billion years. . .
a liar's stone."

Luana Giesta

The Story of the Man who Turned into a Dog*

Actor 2: Ladies and gentlemen, the third story we will tell like this. . .
Actor 3: The same way that it was told to us this afternoon.
Actress: It's "The Story of the Man who Turned into a Dog."
Actor 3: It all started two years ago, on a bench in a plaza. There, sir. . ., where today you tried to guess at a leaf's secret.
Actress: There, where with extended arms we squeeze the world by its head and its feet and we say: "Play, accordion, play!"
Actor 2: There we meet him. (Enter Actor 1) He was. . . (Points to him) as you see him, nothing more. And he was very sad.
Actress: He was our friend. He was looking for work, and we were actors.
Actor 3: He had to support his wife, and we were actors.
Actor 2: He would dream with his life, and he would wake up screaming every night. And we were actors.
Actress: He was our great friend, of course. As you see him. . . (Points to him) Nothing more.
All: And he was very sad!
Actor 3: Time passed. Fall. . .
Actor 2: Summer. . .
Actress: Winter. . .
Actor 3: Spring. . .
Actor 1: That's a lie! There was no Spring.
Actor 2: Fall. . .
Actress: Winter. . .
Actor 3: Summer. And we returned. We went to visit him, because he was our friend.
Actor 2: And we asked: "Is he well?" And his wife said. . .
Actress: I don't know.
Actor 3: Is he bad?
Actress: I don't know.
Actors 2&3: Where is he?
Actress: In the doghouse. (Actor 1 on all fours)
Actors 2&3: Uhhh!
Actor 3: (Observing him) I'm the director of the doghouse, and this

matter seems phenomenal. He arrived barking like a dog. And even though he's dressed like a man, he is a dog, without a doubt.

Actor 2: (Stuttering) I-I am the v-veter-r-rinarian. And th-this m-matter is clear t-to m-me. Even th-though he s-s-seems t-to be a m-man, he, he w-who is here, is a d-dog.

Actor 1: (To the audience) And I, what can I say? I don't know if I'm a man or a dog. And I think that even you won't be able to tell me in the end. Because it all started in the most common way. I went to a factory in search of work. It had been three months that I couldn't find anything, and I went in search of work.

Actor 3: Didn't you read the sign? "No Vacancies."

Actor 1: Yes, I read it. There's nothing for me?

Actor 3: If it says "No Vacancies," there aren't any.

Actor 1: Of course. There's nothing for me?

Actor 3: Nor for you, not for the Pope.

Actor 1: Aha! There's nothing for me?

Actor 3: NO!

Actor 1: Lathe operator. . .

Actor 3: NO!

Actor 1: Mechanic. . .

Actor 3: NO!

Actor 1: S. . .

Actor 3: N. . .

Actor 1: R. . .

Actor 3: N. . .

Actor 1: F. . .

Actor 3: N. . .

Actor 1: Night watchman! Night watchman! Even if it's a night watchman.

Actress: (As if playing a bugle) Tutu, tu-tu-tu! The boss!

(Actors 2&3 speak in sign)

Actor 3: (To the audience.) The night watchman's dog, ladies and gentlemen, had died the night before, after 25 years of loyalty.

Actor 2: It was a very old dog.

Actress: Amen.

Actor 2: (To Actor 1) Do you know how to bark?

Actor 1: Lathe operator.

Actor 2: Do you know how to bark?

Actor 1: Mechanic. . .

Actor 2: Do you know how to bark?

Actor 1: Bricklayer. . .

Actors 2&3: No Vacancies.

Actor 1: (Pause) Ruff. . ., ruff!. . .
Actor 2: Very good, I congratulate you. . .
Actor 3: As salary, you'll receive $10 a day, the doghouse, and meals.
Actor 2: As you see, he earned $10 more than the real dog.
Actor 1: (To his wife) But they promised me a position as soon as a worker would retire, die or be fired. Be happy, Maria, be happy! Ruff. . ., ruff!. . . Be happy, Maria, be happy!
Actors 2&3: Ruff. . ., ruff!. . . Be happy, Maria, be happy!
Actress: Poor thing, he was drunk.
Actor 1: And the next night I began working. . .(Squats on all fours.)
Actor 2: Is the doghouse too small?
Actor 1: I can't squat that low.
Actor 3: Does it hurt?
Actor 1: Yes.
Actor 3: Fine, but listen, don't say, "Yes." You have to start getting used to this. Say: "Ruff. . ., ruff!"
Actor 2: Does it hurt? (Actor 1 doesn't respond) Does it hurt?
Actor 1: Ruff. . ., ruff!. . .
Actor 2: Fine. . . (Exits)
Actor 1: But that night it rained, so I had to stay in the doghouse.
Actor 2: (To Actor 3) It doesn't hurt him anymore.
Actor 3: And he's in the doghouse
Actor 2: (To Actor 1) See how you can get used to anything.
Actress: You can get used to anything. . .
Actors 2&3: Amen. . .
Actress: And he started to get used to it.
Actor 3: Then, when he'd see anyone coming he'd yell: "Ruff. . ., ruff!" Let's see. . .
Actor 1: (Actor 2 runs by) Ruff. . . ruff. . . (Actor 2 crosses silently) Ruff. . . ruff. . . (Actor 2 crosses squatting/bending down) Ruff. . . ruff. . . ruff!. . . (Exits)
Actor 3: (To Actor 2) It's $10 more than our budget.
Actor 2: Mmm!
Actor 3: . . . But the way he applies himself, poor thing, he deserves it.
Actor 2: Mmm!
Actor 3: Besides, he doesn't eat any more than the dog did.
Actor 2: Mmm!
Actor 3: We should help his family!
Actor 2: Mmm! Mmm! Mmm! (They exit)
Actress: But I saw that he was very sad, and I would try to console him when he'd come home. (Enter Actor 1) Today we had visitors!. . .
Actor 1: Yeah?

Actress: The people from the dances at the club, remember?
Actor 1: Yeah.
Actress: What was our dance?
Actor 1: I don't know.
Actress: What do you mean you don't know! "*Maria porque me has abandonado?*" (Actor 1 is on all fours) And one day you brought me a carnation. . . (She looks at him and is horrified) What are you doing?
Actor 1: What?
Actress: You're on all fours. . . (Exits)
Actor 1: I can't take any more of this! I'll talk to the boss!
(Enter Actors 2&3)
Actor 3: It's just that there aren't any other positions. . .
Actor 1: They told me someone died.
Actor 3: Yes, but we have to economize. Wait a little longer, eh?
Actress: So he waited. Three months later he returned.
Actor 1: (To Actor 2) They told me someone has retired.
Actor 2: Yes, but we're thinking of closing down that area. Wait just a little bit longer, eh?
Actress: So he waited. Two months later he returned.
Actor 1: (To Actor 3) Give me the position of one of the guys who you fired for going on strike.
Actor 3: Impossible. Those positions will remain vacant.
Actors 2&3: As punishment! (They exit)
Actor 1: But I couldn't take it anymore. . . so I quit!
Actress: It was the happiest night we had had in a long time. (She takes him by the arm) What do you call this flower?
Actor 1: Flower. . .
Actress: What do you call that star?
Actor 1: Maria.
Actress: (Laughs) Maria is my name!
Actor 1: Hers too. . . hers too! (He takes her hand and motions to kiss it)
Actress: (Pulling her hand back) Don't bite me!
Actor 1: I wasn't going to bite you. . . I was going to kiss you, Maria. . .
Actress: Oh! I thought you were going to bite me. (Exits. Enter Actors 2&3)
Actor 2: Of course. . .
Actor 3: . . . The next morning. . .
Actors 2&3: He would return in search of work.
Actor 1: I looked everywhere, until. . .
Actor 3: Look at him. . . We don't have anything. Except. . .
Actor 1: What?

Actor 3: Last night the night watchman's dog died.
Actor 2: He was 35 years old, poor thing. . .
Actors
2&3: Poor thing!
Actor 1: So I had to go back to work.
Actor 2: I think yes, we'll pay him $15 a day. (Actors 2&3 spin themselves around a few times) Hmm!. . . Hmmm!. . . Hmmm!. . .
Actors
2&3: Accepted. It'll be $15. (Exit)
Actress: (Enters) Of course $450 isn't enough to pay the rent. . .
Actor 1: Look, since I have the doghouse, you can rent our a room with four or five other girls, eh?
Actress: There's no other solution. And since there's not enough to eat either. . .
Actor 1: Look, since I'm used to bones I'll bring home the meat to you, eh?
Actors
2&3: (Entering) The board of directors has agreed!
Actor 1 &
Actress: The board of directors has agreed. . . Blessed be!
(Exit Actors 2&3)
Actor 1: I had gotten used to it. The doghouse seemed bigger. Walking on four legs wasn't so different from walking on two. With Maria, we would see each other in the plaza. (He moves towards her) Since you can't go into my doghouse and I can't go into your room. . . Until one night. . .
Actress: We went out for a walk. And suddenly I didn't feel well. . .
Actor 1: What's wrong?
Actress: I feel dizzy.
Actor 1: Why?
Actress: (Crying) I think. . . I'm going to have a baby. . .
Actor 1: And that's why you're crying?
Actress: I'm afraid. . . I'm afraid!
Actor 1: But why?
Actress: I'm afraid. . . I'm afraid! I don't want to have a baby!
Actor 1: Why, Maria? Why?
Actress: I'm afraid. . . that it'll be. . .a. . . (She mutters the word "dog." Actor 1 stares at her and is horrified. Exits running and barking. Falls to the ground. She stands up) He left. . . He left running!. . . Sometimes he would stop, and sometimes he would run on all fours. . .
Actor 1: That's not true, I didn't stop! I couldn't stop! My waist would hurt if I stopped! Ruff!. . . The cars were running over me. . . People were staring at me. . . (Enter Actors 2&3) Go away!

Haven't you ever seen a dog before?

Actor 2: He's crazy! Call a doctor! (Exits)

Actor 3: He's drunk! Call the police! (Exits)

Actress: Then they told me that one man felt sorry for him, so he approached him sympathetically.

Actor 2: You O.K., buddy? You can't stay on all fours. Do you know how many beautiful things there are to see, standing up, with you eyes turned up? Come on, stand up. . . I'll help you. . . Let's go, stand up now. . .

Actor 1: (Starts to get up, and suddenly) Ruff. . ., ruff!. . . (Bites him) Ruff. . ., ruff!. . . (Exits)

Actor 3: (Enters) So, when after two years without seeing him we asked his wife: "How is he?" she answered. . .

Actress: I don't know.

Actor 2: Is he well?

Actress: I don't know.

Actor 3: Is he bad?

Actress: I don't know.

Actors 2&3: Where is he?

Actress: In the doghouse.

Actor 3: And when we came here, we ran into a boxer. . .

Actor 2: And he told us that he didn't know how to read, but that that didn't matter much because he was a boxer.

Actor 3: Then we ran into a soldier. . .

Actress: Then a policeman. . .

Actor 2: Then more. . . and more. . . and more of you. And we thought maybe we could interest you with the story of our friend. . .

Actress: Because maybe, right now, there is some woman among you thinking: "I won't have. . . I won't have. . .?" (Mutters the word "dog")

Actor 3: Or someone who has been offered a job of a night watchman's dog. . .

Actress: If that's not the case, we are happy.

Actor 2: But if it is, if there is someone among you who they want to turn into a dog, like our friend, then. . . But, well, that. . . that would be another story!

(Curtain)

*Biographical Note:

Translated from a play by Argentinian playwright Osvaldo Dragun (1929-). "Historia del hombre que se convirtio en la perro," Aproximaciones, 3rd Edition (New York: McGraw-Hill Inc. 1994)

"Untitled"
B&W Photography
Akiko Toyanaga

"Philip & Sachi"
B&W Photography
Masami Ataka

Kate DuToit

Pomegranate

it was the fruit
that first chained me
to you
your icy domain
the absence
of pleasure
the white
and light covered
world above
confirmation
of my imprisonment
every year
I look to spring
winter a cold
hard seed
in my belly

Mary Elizabeth Lennon

Lost

"Did you take my car?" he suddenly appeared in the doorway, panicked. Not again, I thought. A trace of fear showed in his eyes as the whites seem to swallow up his pupils. They were like two blueberries popping out of a bowl of cream, reminding me of the remnants of this morning's breakfast. A new study suggests that eating blueberries can improve your memory. I'll try anything at this stage. "Come here, sit down and watch the end of the Pats game, I'll find it for you." Poor thing, he just forgets. Grabbing my coat, I call up to the kids, "Watch grandpa, I won't be gone long" and I head out to search.

On the porch, I startled the cat. She was studying the mindless, stuffed scarecrow, which the kids carefully placed in the old rocker, just this afternoon. Falling leaves were beginning to litter the yard and it looked like the faded quilt in the den. I wish I had that now, as the chill goes right through me. It's that time of day when the sun hasn't quite surrendered to the horizon, but the warmth has disappeared.

Well, there are only three or four places the car can possibly be. He never goes far, he's afraid he won't find his way home. Walking briskly downhill, searching familiar places, I argue with myself. I know something must be done, he might hurt someone or himself, but it's so hard to take away his little remaining independence. Lost in thought, I lose my balance on slippery leaves and pull myself back.

At the gas station, Albert in his old blue flannel shirt, is restocking the road maps when he recognizes me. He runs out waving, "The old man's been in again, charging twenty cents of gas. Is he all right? He's a great guy, but you've got to do something." I know, I know. Al doesn't mind and he's been patient. "I will, I'll figure something out. Thanks." My mind flashes back to the gold card's statement and the endless list of ten to twenty cent charges for gas he forgot he had just gotten. There has to be a way, but I don't know the answer.

Over in the corner of the church parking lot, I see the gray '85 olds. It's dusty, like the clouds blocking the sun and it looks lost in the shadows of the old pine tree. I used to climb on that same tree many years ago. That stale smell of old men emanates from the car's open windows. Inside, I get a trace of Old Spice and close my eyes and reflect on fonder memories. God, I love that smell. God, I love that man.

When I return, the cat's given up on the scarecrow and she's looking to get inside. We find Dad in the den, staring blankly at the game's wrap up. I cover him with the faded quilt and whisper, "Found it." He searches my face and quizzically asks, "Found what? What are you talking about?" Suddenly it all seemed so clear. A few days later, he reappears and asks again, "Did you take my car?" I answer, "What car? "What are you talking about?" Then I look through the stack of old newspapers for that article I read about blueberries and memory.

Mary Elizabeth Lennon

David A. Fernandez

What if We Refuse to Follow the Rules of Fashion?

Senior year. She was the captain of the cheer-leading squad at our high school and worked at Baby Gap. I was a non-athletic kid trying to fit into an artist-type life-style. To her, I was the epitome of who not to hang around with because, to put things in simple terms, I was a freak. That was my place in the social scheme of things. My bottle-bought, blonde, curly hair was long with a hippie hair wrap on a few miscellaneous strands and my shit brown eyes reflected the confidence of ten senior men. She had long, naturally blonde hair, sky blue eyes, a supple figure—she was the standard of American beauty. She had the confidence of four short years of "popular" status, along with a bunch of Irish guardian angel ancestors. So, what did we have in common? Well, one store in the Rockingham Park Mall (Baby Gap) and of course, senior year. I thought I was the shit anyway.

There you have it! A Dominican freak—of which there were about. . . one in the school and that was me. I had survived all the "hey fuck you spic," "hey fuck you freak," even the "hey fuck you spic-freak" from her kind and had gotten used to it too. I continually forgave myself for her imprisoned mind. My goal? To set it free from its cell. So I talked to her in the haven of our clothing store. She gave me the courtesy of returned conversation. After all, we both worked in New Hampshire and lived in Massachusetts. Although, her boyfriend would occasionally visit her there and things were back to "normal" for us. No discourse about pom-poms and punkish hair dye, no talk at all! Not even small. But, when he wasn't there, she smiled a lot and gave into my overly confident, flirtatious ways. Yet, the sense of separation, still present, permeated all communication. This did not stop my eyes from dilating or my mouth from salivating. There was a purpose, and I was determined to break her in. Question is, how? The years preceding this new-found confidence were riddled with armies of "in" people whose sole purpose was to knock me down a peg, and they tried as often as they could. I probably wasn't special enough.

Yep. That's her, alone. Confirmed. Walking through Peter's pearly white gates (alright, maybe not, but the store's entrance was illuminated by her either way) in her jean-blue Gap baseball cap, an icy

yellow mane sticking out the back. The kind of girl that my manhood told me to hate, but the maleness could not stop staring at. Alright, Amen. Think fascist, think. . .think racist. You know she talks shit about you and all the other brown boys when you're not around. But, she's smiling, and I can feel every step she makes toward me. I've got that rollercoaster feeling in my entire body; the one where you become aware of all your organs 'cause you know they're not where they're supposed to be. She's got a boyfriend anyway. She thinks you're the bottom of the pile: not human, poor car thief, a welfare lovin' fuck. Still, I can't ignore the serotonin party that's going on in my head.

Sunflowers. Yeah, that's what triggered it. She smells like Elizabeth Taylor as a young girl, or better yet, a young Celia Cruz (as if either of them ever passed me by). The scent of royal air. That's what people with money smell like, pretty money. Thermosensers are on; her body is heating up, I'm a pressure cooker about to blow. . . so, turn slowly Amen. Somebody needs help, I'm sure of it, some mama's gotta get her baby a Christmas outfit.

"Hi, I'm Amen is there anything I can help you with?" Asked, of course, in my best English accent, bound to make sure those eight years of ESL meant something.

"Hey, Amen, what's up?" Cynthia! Soft, sweet, and a voice that shatters my concentration like frozen glass.

"No, I'm all set, thanks."

"Okay, if you need anything just let me know, my name is Amen."

"Yeah, you said that."

My back is a closed door to her, there to signify nobody's welcome. Cynthia is obviously not adhering because the tapping on my shoulder feels like pounding.

"Hey, you!"

"Hey, what's up? I thought you weren't scheduled tonight. Right?"

"Came to pick up my paycheck."

"Oh."

"Stay right here, I'll be right back."

"Ah. . . sure."

Holding. . .holding. . .I just wanted her to say she's going out with Tim tonight. I mean, I know I invited her out, but I just threw it out there. I was praying she'd say yes, but I knew she wasn't going to. She wouldn't now either. The smile she had on her face was that, *Tim's waiting right outside for me*, smile.

"So, how's the night been going?"

"You, know. Same old, same old."

I was wondering (really caring) for the first time if I looked like a retail clown: gel tamed hair, wrap and all, borrowed standard L.L. Bean red sweater. I had on my discounted, forest green, Gap cordouroys. And, oh, I can't forget the perma-grin.

"Don't worry, you'll be out soon. You still going to Rock's party tonight?" her head tilts to the side as if to feign piqued interest.

"Yeah, I. . ."

"What time?"

"I'll be getting there at ten-thirty."

"Well, alright. I gotta go, but I'll see you there."

Yahtzee! I mean, Bingo! She's coming. I don't know if that's a good thing or a bad thing.

"Hey, don't forget to tell Tim I said 'Hi'."

She turned her body, stood under the archway half a second, then out the doors. Of course, I was putting my best flirt forward.

Closing time couldn't come fast enough for me. I knew I'd be going and it would be interesting, to say the least. For some reason, I believed she would be there, but with an elaborate plan to completely embarrass me in front of my friends. Although, that wasn't really her style. She'd just as well not show up, as a statement of her status.

I got to Rock's, and as I was pulling into the driveway, signs of a "Pierce Party" were more than evident. The Pierces lived on a small street, one of those dead-end, rotary-type streets. Just in front of their house, the party-obvious cars were parked, lining the street. Some poor kid with too much of something in him was talking to the lamp post; his shadow was a black spot under the orange beam of light. So, I parked. I didn't know what she was driving, and it didn't matter anyway, she wasn't coming. Fuck it, I went in. Rock's house was big, and nicer than I had ever dreamed any house could be. The only nice houses I ever saw were the ones my little cousins had to entertain Black Barbie and her boyfriend Ken, it would be a few years before Barbie had a tropical-island friend to entertain. It was two floors with many places to get lost, especially if you were in a drunken stupor. But, I was concerning myself with the first floor. The bedrooms could wait forever, probably. That was decided by the Gods on any given night.

A short hallway and it led right into the kitchen. Along the way, I could stop and make a mental checklist: a head count in any of the rooms to the sides. Liquor poured from every direction. My pace seemed drawn out, drunken from my entrance into the kitchen; everything was paisley. It was like I had been staring at a light bulb for hours. The yellow-red bulbs floated around everywhere, framing the party people's faces as I gazed, denying my search for her. I knew she

wouldn't show. It's too late now, but maybe not; maybe, it's early for her. You can never tell these things—never.

"Hey, Amen! Amen!" Rock's ruckus sound means he's having a good time. All fucked up, he wouldn't have it any other way.

"Get over here, man."

"Yeah, yeah, what. . ."

"Hey, you." The shock from her glimmering white-toothed smile was too much for me. It injected me with a straight dose of atropine-sobriety. Although my mind was still *pensando* in the speed of *Espanol,* I was speaking, though very slowly, in English.

"What's up. . .you, uh. . .so, I see you escaped the clutches of the overseer." Don't ask. I don't know where I came up with that one. From the distorted look on her face, and the bulging radius of her eyes, I could tell she didn't know either. Either way, I'm destined to break that American character of hers; introduce her to the wonderful world of what I think I am.

"So, this seems to be dying down. I should have come earlier."

"Yeah, no big deal. So, do you know everyone?"

"Ahhh, kinda." Her tone indicated that she was not here to make any new best friends. Maybe she didn't even know why she was here at all. If only she knew what she was in for. I thought of maybe asking her why we never talked 'til now; why, without a word, she never acknowledged my smile when we would pass each other in the hall.

"Wanna sit down somewhere?" I began to move, but the choice was hers. I was hoping that she'd pick.

"Can we go in here?" A quiet place to sit; this was perfect. The den, it was the best room. It was almost entirely separated from the rest of the house. The only problem was that, except for a small wall, the rest was French glass doors.

"Something to drink? Beer, wine. . .Jagermiester?" Nothing but a serious glow. The remaining lights in the house were candles. Some of the light managed to travel to her, leaving her face half-lit, and her eyes like a cat's in the dark.

"Oh, no thanks. Why are we standing?" Good question. I could smell her on the couch, looking up at me, waiting. I could feel my contrived accent slipping back to what it was when I first picked up America, filling my machismo, making me sick to be the Latin lover that her white fantasies wanted me to be. My stomach was swimming. I was far away, at the other end of the afghan covered plaid couch.

"I can't believe you came. I'm glad." My rolodex of things to say was, at this point, gone.
I had shifted back to being primal.

"Me too."

Her quietness was all I needed to move in on her. Would she just deny me, or would she be unable to resist what I knew she wanted? If she gave in, she would help me achieve what I wanted: an admission that I was more than her boyfriend ever was, and everything her parents could never imagine, even if they had the capacity to.

"Listen, Cynthia. I just wanted you to know. . ." She lunges with her lips to stop me from talking, stop me from thinking, and tastes like a dozen different sampler lip glosses, as if the only stimulation she had ever received in her life was centered around the aluminum rimmed kiosk of trial make-up at the mall. Her assault had a relentless quality that I thought would never give, never yield a chance for a gasp of air. It would be too good to be true if I choked right now, but I won't, because I can't.

"Uh...?" For my accumulating lack of better words. She stops at nothing and begins to pull the layers off methodically, first my sweater, then on through two layers of shirts. My nipples erect from the cold are balanced out by her closeness, the sensation is ambiguous. Her hands are tiny, soft, and work in a skillful calculated process as she sinks down between my legs (which is exactly where I want her) and begins to undo the buttonfly on my cordouroys. I am all undone. My clothes are scattered frivolously in the dark as I wait for the turn to be mine, and it is. Standing there in front of her, in front of me, a small waft of hot air recycles between us in a linger. I am exposed, and her look resigning her clothes —no her self. I pick her apart. Her small framed shoulders balance the pink thermal she wears over her breasts that will peer at me unmoving, now. I tear at the cloth to destroy this separation between me and my adopted white beauty queen; to see the only brown she's ever known represented as two cosmic circles revolving around pink fleshy suns. Her preppie-cuffed jeans give way easily to the slow force of my hands, I can see she wants this, she wants me. She gives up at a pleasing pace as I sit on the couch and she climbs, readily displaying the pressed pink her tendons form against her inner thighs, only to soon be normalized to their original white by the first contraction of my pelvis. In that instant is the multiple succession of motion into her, into another, and back out again.

Skin shown through dark flickers of candle, and creeps of orange street lights make a break for it through tiny seams in the curtains. Animating a shadow cast on her blank canvas. The buzz of our bodies is silenced by my fascination with the echo of her moisture on me, in her. This is it, success I know, I think. Rush.

All of the pretty things I had ever thought of, or ever seen, flashed in a strobe before my eyes. Collapsing slowly into an immense catastrophe. An implosion that leaves me famished, vanquished,

vanished. The suffering of a tremendous force of gravity left behind in her wake with no trace of anything. Something was dying for something being born. Her tongue was pointing, searching my upper lip trying to rip the words out of my mouth, rip the thoughts out of my head. Not knowing who I am, what I'm about; barely gripping to the memory of something that now meant *nothing.* She shifted her body forward and rested on my pelvis, and all I see: her passion done. Her breath in precise time with my pulse. The radiance of her breath reaching closer and closer to my ear.

"Speak Spanish to me?" Just then, I knew where I belonged.

"I. . .can't."

I forgot. I'd forgotten my language like the clothes I was wearing; naked. Relieved. The rules had been broken. Assimilated.

David A. Fernandez

John Black

Ode

On a late November day
at my desk to write a poem
I look for a notebook
by the foot of my chair
but don't find it — instead
there is a pile of books stacked
like a small staircase that
somehow defies gravity
until I reach for a thin
paperback halfway up
and try to slide it out fast
but it doesn't work and the top-
half of the stack collapses at my feet
where I exchange the paperback
for a red binding and flip it
open to a page that happens
to be an old love poem
about death and a lake
which we have read together
so I read it twice now before
putting it down knowing
the writer of the poem is dead
and the love perished too —
but you are reading this now
and before you get to the end
I am telling you I love you
even though the poem began
as an ode to frustration and
dirty coffee cups and dried
ketchup and a floor covered
with grit that makes me long
for the sheets covering you
with crumbs and books.

"Woman Under The Influence #4"
B&W Photography
David Hartman

"Woman Under The Influence #10"
B&W Photography
David Hartman

"When In Rome. . ."
B&W Photography
Maya Grigorovich-Barsky

"When In Rome. . ."
B&W Photography
Maya Grigorovich-Barsky